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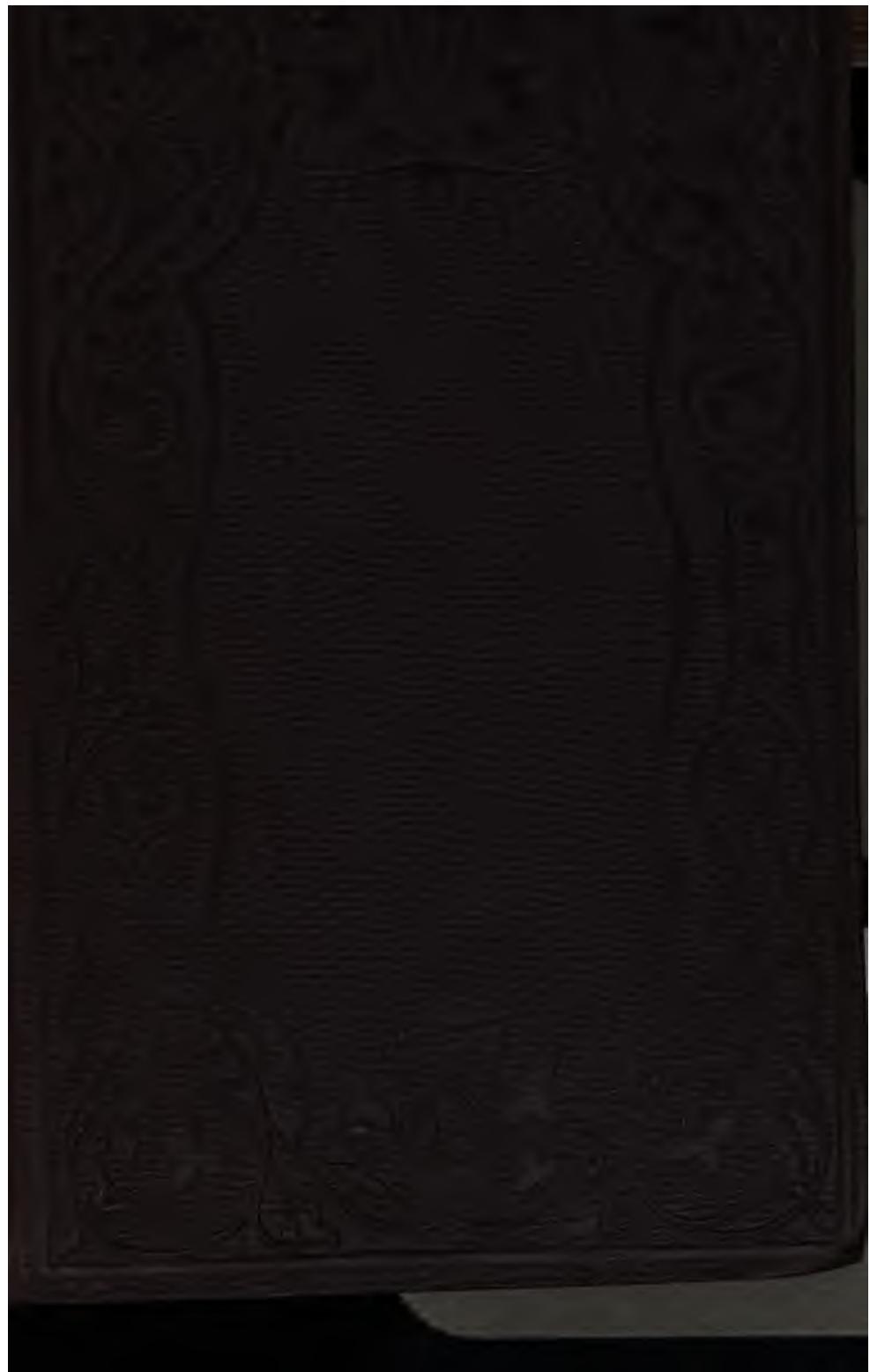
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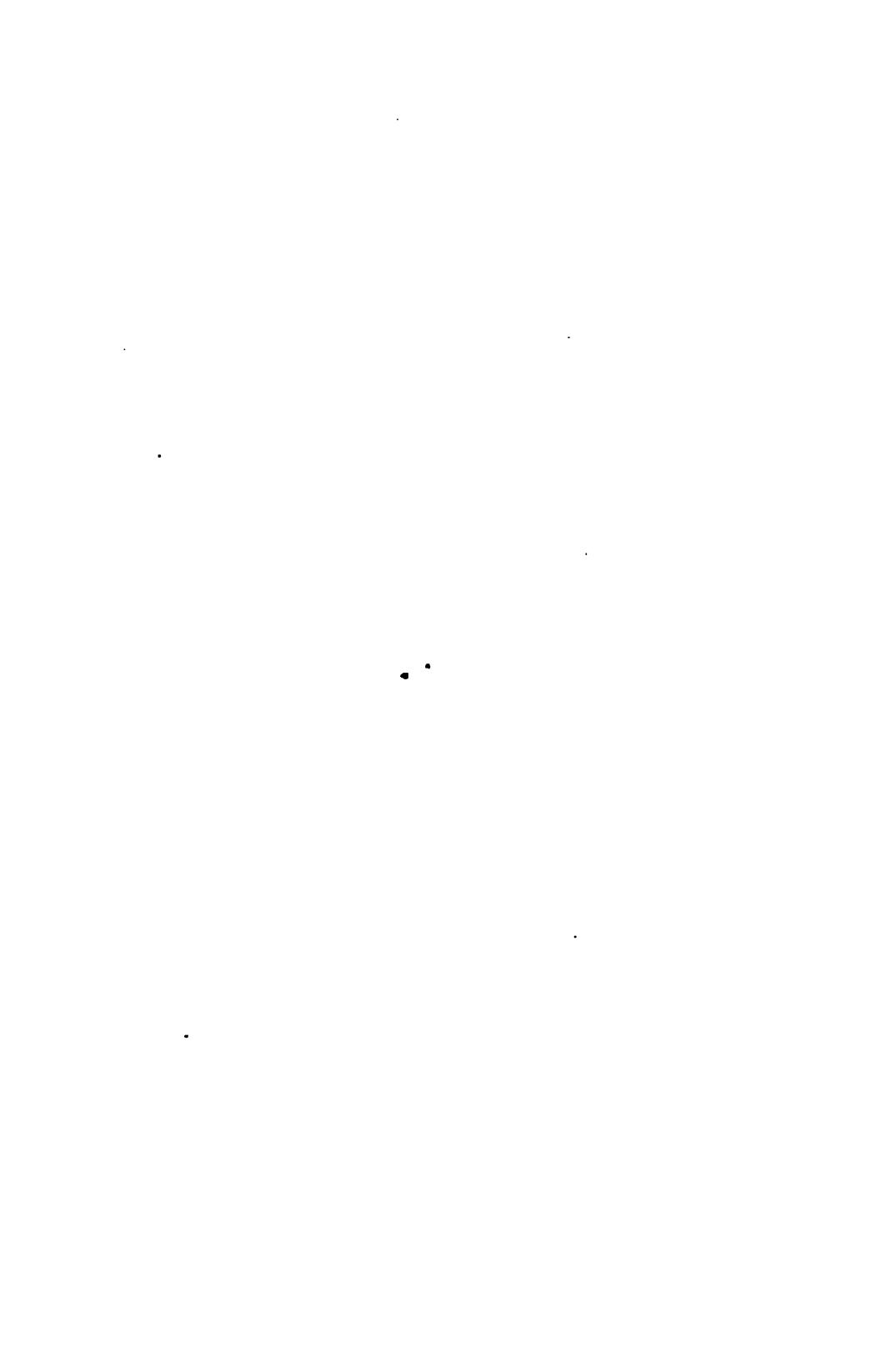
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# M I L I T A R Y L I F E

IX

## A L G E R I A.

BY

THE COUNT P. DE CASTELLANE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:  
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,  
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,  
18, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1858.

237. b. 42.

LONDON:  
M. S. MYERS, PRINTER,  
22, TAVISTOCK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

## MILITARY LIFE IN ALGERIA.

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### A WINTER CAMPAIGN.

#### II.

THE marauding portion of the enemy, following us on the plain, spread out to right and left in search of pillage ; but what was there to pillage ? The tents\* of the Khalifat Sidi-el-Aribi, had fallen back towards the Cheliff. Not, therefore, quite to lose their day, the marauders set fire to ricks of straw. Instantaneously a conflagration burst out,

\* The *tent* in Africa is a collective expression signifying a house, a family.

all the heaps of stubble and herbs, dried up by a burning sun of four months, caught the flame, and during the night the whole plain was like an ocean of fire. For long hours together, we saw the clouds coloured with the deep red tint, and throw out far and wide the ill-omened reflection. It was as if a blood-dipped banner of revolt were spread over the whole country, announcing the day of deliverance to the insurgents.

Next day we received news from Djemâa-Ghazaout. The rising of the Flittas was not a partial result. From the western frontier to beyond Kerraich, the country had risen as one man. Every movement brought the General some new bit of bad news. Another tribe had deserted our cause. All—even to the people of the plain—passed over to the enemy ; and of all his numerous attendants, Sidi-el-Aribi could only retain those in his service who were attached to him by ties of blood.

Numerous reinforcements had, however, arrived at Mostaganem. Being joined by Colonel Tartas, we had now two excellent squadrons of cavalry ; valiant troops, demanding only an opportunity of revenge. It is true that our forced inaction had encouraged the audacity of Bou-Maza, and that

his strength, with his audacity, had increased. On the 3rd of October, he had set fire to the house of the Khalifat, and the next day attempted a razzia on the other bank of the Mina. It was then that General Bourjolly determined to quit Relizann, and to fall back upon Bel-Assel. At one o'clock, then, the bivouac was raised, and, when the day's march was about half over, Lieutenant Nérat bore orders to Colonel Tartas to incline to the right with the cavalry, and to march in the direction of the Cheliff of the Mina. The Colonel was to form a junction with the little troop of Sidi-el-Aribi on his route, and then to keep an eye on Bou-Maza, and recover from him, if possible, a part of his booty.

In spite of the four days' provender, and four days' provision, with which our horses were loaded, we trotted smartly on towards our destination. When within half a league of the confluence of the Cheliff and of the Mina, the Khalifat Sidi-el-Aribi, at the head of his cavaliers, came in sight before we expected him. His face was flushed with combat, his stately horse covered with foam ; he looked like a knight-banneret of the middle ages. He saluted the colonel, and took his seat beside us. It was five o'clock. The sun of

Africa, which at the decline of day, sheds brown tints and heat unknown in the North upon the earth, streamed its setting rays upon us as red as blood. We pushed our horses on, and looked eagerly before us. One more turn of the road, and we should see the enemy. This was soon done, and cavaliers innumerable, in firm phalanx, fronted us. In the centre floated a broad green banner, and the two wings of the enemy, in the shape of a horse shoe, seemed ready to envelope us. "Slow time!" cried the Colonel, and we pulled up, and advanced at a steady walk, sabres in their sheaths. In his sonorous, field-day voice, Colonel Tartas then gave the word of command, and the squadrons formed into rank, each having a division of reserve. Between the two squadrons marched the Colonel with his bannerolle; by his side was the Khalifat; behind him a little escort; on our two wings a few Arab cavaliers, who had remained faithful to us. "Where is the rallying place?" asked the adjutant major. "Behind the enemy, where my banner will be seen," replied the Colonel; and, as if linked together with chains, the squadron advanced at a trot, sabres still in their sheaths. When within musket range, "Draw swords!" cried the Colonel,

and two hundred and fifty sabres were drawn in the same moment as by a single hand. At a hundred paces further on, we broke into a gallop, serried still together as a wall. Seeing this iron storm, so calm, so collected, so strong, advancing upon them, the innumerable host hesitated. A confused noise, like the noise of waves in a tempest, rose up; for a moment they fluctuated undecided, and the instant after disappeared, like dust scattered by the wind. In a quarter of an hour we halted. A hundred of the enemy had bitten the dust, and the cavaliers of Sidi-el-Aribi, pursuing the fugitives, came back laden with spoils. We were victorious without a battle; but the slightest hesitation, being without support, and at three leagues and a half from all possibility of succour, would have destroyed us. Firmness, collectedness, and boldness, saved us.

This charge was, since we left Flittas, our first offensive movement, our first success. Flocking round Colonel Tartas and his banner which had been twice shot through, the men of great tents,\* the bronzed-faced Arab chiefs, their eyes sparkling

\* So are men of great families in Africa called; as we say in France, such a one is of a good house.

with the excitement of powder, thanked him as their saviour. At their head, with the majestic dignity that never forsook him, stood Sidi-el-Aribi, and around, to complete the scene, foaming horses, chasseurs leaning on their saddles, the floating drapery of Arab costume, and the heads of some of the enemy at their saddle-bows. All this gave to the spectacle something of the wild grandeur of a victory in primitive times.

The night had closed in. It was time to be on our road again towards the camp; so the trumpets sounded the march; and with jokes and songs we made the road to Bel-Assel pleasant and short. At ten o'clock the chasseurs entered the bivouac. The horses were picketed, but we had four hours to wait before they were unsaddled, which was the signal that we might retire to rest, of which we stood in great need.

This success gave the first check to the insurrection in this part of the country. In spite of fevers and marches, we remained long at Bel-Assel. It was a good military position, and we had to wait for the Orleansville column, in order to penetrate again into the Flittas country. We made many successful razzias. On these occasions we started in the evenings, marched all night,

and in the day chastised the rebels. In the morning, on ordinary days, the cavalry went on foraging parties, with the beasts of burthen. Sometimes they were molested by the enemy, but on these fine open plains combat was only an exciting exercise. At other times their mission was to carry off grain from the grain pits for the use of the column. Then it was that the *ban* and *arrièrre ban* of the friendly tribes were convoked; old men, women, and children, all came, some with wretched little donkeys, and woollen racks; others with mules. Having reached the place where pits were known to be, the ground was sounded by ramrods, and as soon as any spot partially sunk or gave way, or felt hollow, the spade was resorted to, and an aperture soon effected through which a man might slip, who usually found corn and barley in abundance. In every tribe the same family make these pits, as they are thought to have preserved by tradition from their fathers the particular art of doing so. The soldiers took great pleasure in these expeditions. The one who went first into the aperture was obliged to fill the sacks in a stooping position; when, the pit being widened, his comrades helped him; and when they came out from under ground they were

eovered with sweat, dust and dirt, but as happy as possible ; for they knew well the great importance of keeping their horses in good condition ; as, if the horse got out of heart, the rider was often obliged to go on foot for a long march perhaps ; and then in battle, which might any day happen, without a horse to be relied upon, the trooper felt himself not half a man.

The Orleansville column at last joined us, giving us not only an excellent infantry corps, but two squadrons of chasseurs, and a squadron of Spahis. This last body, without losing any of its precious Arab qualities, gained much in discipline under the command of Captain Fleury. Being devoted to their Captain, they followed him wherever he would lead, never doubting either of him or of themselves. When one saw them mounted on good horses, upright in their silver stirrups, their haiks floating, and the red burnous thrown over their shoulders, one could almost fancy the men-of-arms of old chronicles, of whom we have such marvellous portraits, were passing before one. Half the squadron had been put *hors-de-combat* in less than three months. This was a brevet of courage, of which our Spahis were about to give us new proofs. We had now

strong reinforcements, and might have our revenge on the Flittas.

In the month of October the two combined columns marched into the country of the Flittas, bivouacking first at Touiza. We remained there long enough for General Bourjolly to send out foraging cavalry parties under the escort of a battalion of infantry.

A little beyond the plain of the Mina, there is a valley called Touiza of the Beni-Dergoun, from the name of the tribe which inhabits it. This valley leads to the Flittas mountains, which are parallel to the sea, and entering the mountains, forms towards the east a broad basin, covered with mastick trees, and intersected here and there by glades and corn fields. To the south, opposite Touiza, is the defile of Tifour ; on the west, two leagues off, the passage of Zamora ; on the east, at the bottom of this great basin, a winding road cut through the mountain, which leads to Oued-Melab and towards the Guerboussa. This road goes straight to the Khamis of the Beni-Ouragh. On the heights, to our left, we were on the look-out for straw ; and indeed we soon saw mounds of earth, which indicated the existence of ricks ; for to prevent the straw, broken to bits under the

horses' feet when the corn is trodden out, being carried away by the wind, the Arabs surround the ricks with thick layers of turf, about four feet in circumference, and five in length, which shelter them from the wind and the rain too. It requires no more than an hour to construct a granary on the field just reaped. Such, at least, is the practice among the Kerraich and the Flittas.

We were just on the point of plucking away the layers of turf, and filling our sacks, whilst the *vidette* watched the enemy at the bottom of the wood beneath us, when we heard many shots fired from the camp itself. At the same time, from all the thickets around, there arose stunning hurrahs and shouts. An infantry charge, with beat of drum, very soon, however, swept the neighbouring hills, whilst bombs from afar drove the Arabs from the wood. Colonel Tartas, at the same time, sounded to horse; and throwing away our sacks, we hastened to cut off the retreat of the enemy. Spahis and chasseurs kept in good order, in spite of the inequalities of the ground, and we pursued the enemy for two hours up to the mountains. The rally was then sounded, and we returned at a walk, a little annoyed by the Arab

musketry, but having left a good number of killed behind us.

On the next day, the column, marching in the direction of the Guer Coupa, passed the defile, and bivouacked on Oued-Melab. Many forays were attempted. Some succeeded, others failed. One day the Orleans chasseurs were ordered to beat up a wooded mountain. On the other side of it there was a precipitous rock, more than fifty feet high, and at thirty feet from the rock's edge was the entrance of a cavern, which, from below, looked merely like a black point. This, it was said, was one of the haunts of the Arabs, where they hid their treasures, and where probably some of them had, at this time, found a refuge. It was worth while testing the truth of this report, and it was decided that one of our Arab prisoners should lead the way, and go first into the cavern. This was a good idea, only it met with one obstacle—the poor devil of an Arab positively refused to be our guide; and not without a very sufficient reason; for he knew that if one of his countrymen should be hidden in the cavern, his death would be certain. Losing no time in useless arguments, two of our soldiers went through a little pantomimic exercise, so exceedingly ex-

pressive and persuasive, that the prisoner was thereby made clearly to understand that it would be his safest plan to undertake the adventure. This military eloquence having prevailed, two cords, *nolens volens*, were passed under his arms, and the Arab was lowered down the descent, scrambling afterwards along the rock by the help of a few bushes here and there growing out of its fissures. He soon reached the entrance of the cavern, and disappeared, the moment afterwards reappearing, and making a sign that we might follow, as no one was within the rock. As soon done as said; our soldiers were in a few seconds in the cavern of Ali-Baba. Haiks, carpets, burnous, provisions of all sorts, even tam-tams and wooden plates were carried off; the soldiers clambered again up the rock, and the party returned to the camp, bringing with them cattle and prisoners they had captured in the wood.

A few days afterwards, we bivouacked at Darben-Abdallah, an admirable military position. The Menasfa, running among ravines of rocks, defends it on three sides. From this position we could carry on a war against the granaries, that is the grain pits (Silos), of the Flittas. As for the

enemy, it was impossible to fight with or capture them, for they had disappeared, as it were, by enchantment. All before and around us was perfectly calm, but it was the calm of emptiness. Most of the Flittas had taken refuge, with their flocks, in the woods, so we were obliged again to begin our razzias, and carry on the war against the corn and cattle of the enemy, in which consisted all their resources. It is, in fact, only by the possession, or by the destruction of these two species of property, that we can exercise any influence over the Arabs. The African razzia, which has been such a fertile theme for the declamation of great orators and of opposition journalists, which has been called *organized robbery*, what is it but simply a repetition of what takes place in Europe under another name? What is war? A hunt of interests. And in Europe, when once masters of two or three great centres, a whole country is yours. But in Africa, it is different; for how can one get hold of a population which has no fixed residences, and which is attached only to particular places for a season by its moveable pickets and tents? What force, what punishments, what invasion, can conquer men without cities and without houses, who, like

the Scythians, carry their whole property with them ?

“ *Quorum plaustra vagas,  
Rite trahunt domos?* ”

There is no means of doing it, but by taking away from them the corn that feeds and the flocks that clothe them. Hence the war against grain and cattle, the razzia.

We recommence, then, our partisan life, so full of adventure and sudden surprises, which under an African sky has a charm quite inexpressible. One day we set out very early on one of our expeditions, and penetrated into frightful ravines, stretching to the west of a ridge of land which separates streams that run into the Mina. The road we were following was about two feet broad, and wound along the steep sides of a hill, leading to the bottom of a ravine on the left. Green oaks, mastick trees, and broken trunks covered the whole of this unsafe ground. In the centre of a basin the waters had hollowed a deep ditch across slips of wild vegetation, which was a ravine within a ravine. In the winter rapid falls fell furiously from every hill, tearing a passage through earth and trees, hurrying both away in their course, and opening subterraneous passages, to

reach the quicker a great artery or hollowed bed, fifty feet broad and thirty deep. In the summer when there are a few fine months, no rain, and hardly a drop of dew falls, it is easy to penetrate into these subterranean issues. Now, according to reports we had received, these catacombs contained a great part of the booty and treasures of a tribe of the Flittas. It was said, also, that a great number of them had taken refuge in them, and we were determined to test the truth of this information. Many hiding places were for this purpose explored in vain; at last, about the middle of the ravine, two soldiers, crawling to one of the subterranean orifices, received two balls in the head. At the same instant a volley of balls from the right and the left fell among us. Our position was certainly a difficult one. How were we to extricate ourselves? To attack our assailants in front would have been certain death, to turn their flank was impossible; nevertheless, it was necessary, at any cost, to overcome the obstacle. In vain we menaced the enemy, in vain we promised to spare their lives; they were deaf to all menaces, to all persuasions. What was to be done? Nothing, but to have recourse to the eloquence of action, to smoke the fox out of his

hole. We set, then, about making fagots, and, by way of prologue, threw two or three lighted ones into the entrance of the cavern. Our parley thereupon recommenced with as little success as at first. We were forced, therefore, to throw in more blazing faggots, when we waited again. I must do justice to these brave fellows. Whilst they could breathe they resisted. But the fire and the smoke overcame them at last, and they all came out and surrendered. Then sheep, goats, men, women, and children issued from the earth, and became our prisoners and our booty.

Two hundred Arab cavaliers, nearly all of them Medjehrs or Bordjias\* formed our *Marqhzen*, under the command of Mustapha-ben-Dif. The word *Marqhzen* signifies in Arabic, magazine or arsenal; and from hence comes the name given to the state cavaliers. The marqhzen form a kind of police force. Their chief had remained faithful to us at times when almost all our native allies fell away; he had rendered us great services during the actual campaign which was about to be closed, by winter expeditions and forays, that were among the most difficult and distressing enterprises of the whole African war.

\* The Medjehrs and the Bordjias belong to the Arab tribes inhabiting the environs of Mostaganem.

## III.

Whilst the two combined columns were operating in the Flittas, the insurrection had spread in the environs of Orleansville. Colonel St. Arnaud hastened, therefore, to return to his sub-division. Happily for us, the revolt broke out on this side at the moment when Marshal Bugeaud, coming from Algiers by Teniet-el-Had, arrived in this part of the country. His cavalry not being sufficiently numerous, the marshal took with him the squadrons of General Bourjolly, who was about to receive reinforcements from Mostaganem, and then set out in the direction of Thiaret.

The rigorous winter season increased our fatigues. To oppressive heats had succeeded intense cold, to which we were fully exposed on heights six hundred feet above the level of the

sea. The first rains of Autumn, which the Arabs call the *rain of lambs*, had already fallen. A month later come the heavier winter rains in large flooding drops. The bad weather was about to set in.

We were in the country of the Kerräich. Whilst the marshal was advancing upon the high lands of Riou, our mission was to surprise Abd-el-Kader, who was then in the neighbourhood. We set out in the evening, under the orders of General Yousouf. The whole night was passed in traversing mountains and defiles. It was a heavy march. Towards three o'clock in the morning, a small rain, hardly regarded at first, fell incessantly, till we became nearly frozen on our horses, which slipped about on narrow paths hardly two feet broad. As the day began to dawn one of my comrades and myself halted under a clump of palm trees, and drank clandestinely a few mouthsfull of brandy, a precious refreshment on such an occasion. The cold of the morning, after a night passed on horseback, produced an almost overpowering inclination to sleep; but the halt of the column, which shortly took place, was too short for us to indulge it. In an hour's time we had to be again on horseback, and through

ravines, rain, and hail, to press on, to join the column of Marshal Bugeaud. It was near four o'clock when we debouched on the heights of Riou, which we descended by a narrow path hardly discernible. At last we reached the bivouac of the Marshal. For six days we were exposed to a deluge of rain. It rained, and rained, and rained on, and not a hope of its holding up ! Torrents poured down without ceasing, falling in thick continuous streams on the tents, with a sound that froze one to the marrow. The ground, even where firmest, had become liquid mud. He was a bold man who dared to put his nose out of his tent. One step sufficed to plunge him up to his knees in a miry pool. Then we were no longer like soldiers well equipped, clean and glittering in our uniforms ; we had more the appearance of savages. Our poor horses were as miserable as their masters and not less to be pitied ; their ears down, their heads between their legs, whilst the wind and the rain beat upon them ; they were really pitiable objects. All this was disheartening in the extreme ; and worse than all, provender was getting scarce. Masters and horses were in this respect in equally bad case, for our provisions began to fall short, and we were

about to be put on short allowance. In Africa every thing must be foreseen before taking the field; no reliance can be placed on chances. For two months no supplies had reached us. Our wine was out, and our brandy was diminishing rapidly. Fortunately, we had still sugar and coffee in abundance; and we put the best face on our calamity, for so our sufferings might be called. Neither rain, wind, cold, nor scarcity disturbed our military philosophy. But our horses were not so patient as we were, and at any cost, it was necessary to provide for them. Expeditions in search of grain pits, across almost impassable roads, slippery paths, and steep mountain ridges, were therefore undertaken. Some were found, but we did not find much in them; so for four days our poor horses had but a handful of barley, with, to make up the deficiency, plenty of mud, rain, and hail.

Every day we received news of him whom we were in search of, Abd-el-Kader. According to the reports of spies, he was in the country of the Flittas, not far from us, and might be easily overtaken. The rain continued, nevertheless, to rain on; but the barometer rose, and the weather was prognostical of a favourable change of the moon.

Whatever the weather might be, we could

remain no longer inactive. It would not do to allow Abd-el-Kader to escape, if possible to capture him. The order was consequently given that the cavalry should hold themselves in readiness to march; and half an hour before daybreak we quitted the bivouac soaked to the skin. Whilst we were on our march, the marshal moved down the Riou and encamped at the confluence of that river and the Oued Teguiguess. It was there that we were to join him. Two hours after our departure the rain ceased, and a west wind drove away the clouds. We advanced quickly. The horses, knocked up by bad weather and scanty provender, got with difficulty through the heavy soil; but get on we must. The enemies' *videttes* had warned the Emir of our approach; so much the worse for stragglers. Twenty of our men, not able to follow us, were left behind.

Thus exhausted and breathless, we arrived at Temda just in time to see the regular horse of Abd-el-Kader debouch from a hill, with spread ensigns. In the centre of the squadron floated the great white banner with an embroidered hand, the sign of command; and on the two wings were seen little banneroles of different colours. The whole band of Arab cavaliers advanced

towards us, seemingly at a charge. The better to receive them, we broke into a gallop ; but we were deceived in our expectation, for they suddenly made a turn to the left and gained a height, not, however, until they had fired a volley, and discharged all their arms. We followed them in close pursuit, sword in hand. Captain Larocheboucault, whose squadron took the lead, killed a few of them ; but our tired horses, being quite knocked up, refused to go further. After a halt of an hour, we resumed our march to Oued-Teguiguess. We followed, as long as we could, the road we had traversed in the morning, in the hope of rallying the men left behind. Night surprised us in the gorges of rocks. The trumpets sounded from time to time. In the silence and darkness, in the midst of these rocky hills, where the strongest felt bowed down with sleep, these shrill brayings, startling silence and solitude, produced a singular impression. They were like alarum cries, repeated by the echoes, to awake the dead. At ten o'clock we reached the bivouac of Marshal Bugeaud. One of our wounded, named Barthelmy, had received five shots. This Barthelmy is one of the heroes of our Odyssey. In the morning he was struck by a ball from his

horse, and left on the ground. A foraging party of the enemy perceiving him, sent two more balls through his body ; he pretended to be dead. The Arabs then plundered him, and abandoned, as they thought, the corpse. One of them, however, returned—one of those miscreants (unhappily there are some even among the French) who are only courageous against the dead—and placed the muzzle of his gun on his temple. But his horse started, and the shot merely grazed the forehead of the chasseur.

On the next day, the 24th December, the Marshal formed a little column, composed of the cavalry and six hundred infantry, of which he gave the command to General Yousouf. Our first object was to reach Thiaret for barley and forage, after which we were to continue our pursuit of Abd-el-Kader. Great was our joy in finding at our first bivouac those whom we had left behind us on the evening before, and whom we had hardly hoped to see again. They had retreated to and fortified themselves in a marabout, where they remained till towards the close of the day ; when they heard the drums and bugles of the column, which they rejoined, happily without impediment.

As we approached Thiaret, the aspect of the country completely changed. To the long grey, naked hills, piled upon each other along the horizon, now succeeded woods of oak and cedar, large pasture lands, and springs of water. A troop of gazelles fled before our horses, sometimes bounding across the trees, sometimes stopping and turning round, as it were, to defy us, but swiftly disappearing the moment they were pursued. From time to time the sun broke out between clouds, throwing a pale light on a part of the wood, whilst the long range of the Thiaret mountains threw out the lengthened shadows of its precipitous crests. At last we attained the passage of the Guertoufa, and saw before us the ascent, two hundred feet high, which we were to pass over. To accomplish this, it was necessary to scramble over a stone cascade, and then to wind zigzag up the side of the mountain. Eagles spread their wings majestically over our heads. Our horses' hoofs sounded hard upon the stones, and our sabres clicked against the walls of rock as we passed, one by one. These obstacles roused up the whole man, while the grandeur around filled the heart with noble thoughts; and then, when we reached the summit, how magnificent and

imposing was the spectacle ! At our feet the immense cascade of rocks we had just clambered up lay rolled out, as it were, in all its length, under the glare of the sun, which glittered on the bayonets of our infantry. Further on, woods, verdure, meadows ; further on still, hills rising upon hills. The eye rested, at last, on the long silhouettes, dim and naked, which in the distance formed the horizon, and were like waves to which some unknown force had given fixity when most massed and tumbling together. At the extremity of the Guertoufa, lighted up by the last rays of the sun, might be seen, rising from the midst, bluish fantastic vapours, the lofty mountains of Bel-Assel. A little to the right, the two peaks of Teguiguess stood out like a headland, stretching along to a distance of twenty leagues towards the east, where they seemed to strike against the case of the Ouarsenis, whose long crest, swelling up in solitary sublimity, commanded a view of the whole country sixty leagues round. The jagged obelisk form of this crest gave it the appearance of an ancient cathedral, surmounted by a majestic dome. There was a grandeur and serenity in the whole of this landscape, that carried the thoughts back to the primitive ages.

The defile continued still for some five hundred meters, and then we were at Thiaret. This post, on the frontier of the Tell and of the little desert, is renowned for the excellence of its water. The Tell, the nursing mother of Africa, produces corn as abundantly as the Sersous, and feeds innumerable flocks. It seems as if God had determined to set a rampart of mountains, as a barrier, between these two people. The highest of these mountains is the Thiaret chain, which can only be crossed at three passages. From Thiaret a part of the Sersous may be discovered, which stretches out in a plain of little hillocks, from between almost each of which gushes a spring of water, thanks to which the pasturage is extremely rich, and feeds large flocks and herds of sheep and cattle.

The war had for a long time hindered the re-victualling of Thiaret; merchants would not go there. On our arrival we found a dearth of all things. A bougie was a wonder, and there was only a dim recollection among the officers of the garrison of having formerly drank wine. Happily, barley and provender failed not, and for two days our horses could eat their fill. At the expiration of these two days we were, despite the cold and the ice, again in pursuit of the Emir. This ex-

pedition was a cruelly severe one ; no wood and no shelter against the weather ; a few thistles and dried dung to cook our food ; every morning our tents stiff with frost and icicles ; the only variation being rain. It was at this moment that the first day of the year 1846, pale with abstinence and desolation, showed its haggard face. It seemed like a mockery to wish one another a happy new year, for we were destitute of everything. The sugar was all consumed, the brandy drunk, and not a coffee berry remained. Separated from our friends, far from the inhabited world, for three long months indeed quite isolated, we were like passengers in a ship. But the column had become our country, the tent our house, the squadron our family, and the hours passed away in active occupation, constantly varied by some new emotion, or by the expectation of new dangers. Unfortunately, the rain, the wind, the cold, the hail, and the frost, kept us constant company. On the second of January they seemed to have met together by appointment to celebrate the fête of storms. This second of January was a day violently tempestuous all over Africa. Eight hundred men perished in the snow at Sétif, at the very time when we, marching on Thiaret, were

bending on our saddles under a storm of iced rain and melted snow, mixed with enormous hailstones, and buffeted by a horrible north-east wind. On our arrival at Thiaret six men were carried to the hospital with frozen feet. The rest made great fires; that is to say, burning coals were thrown in holes dug for the purpose in each tent. Then we dined, warmed ourselves again, and slept as we could.

Toward the end of February we had already for some time rejoined the marshal, but we did not remain long inactive; Abd-el-Kader, it was reported, was in the neighbourhood of Oled-Nail, so we marched in an eastern direction, for it was necessary to take up a position which would enable us to watch his movements in the south, whilst we could, at the same time, incline at pleasure to the east or west. The sources of the Narh-Ouessel were therefore just the post that suited us. Thither our column moved, having no other cavalry force than the squadrons of the 4th African Chasseurs. The arrival of troops, half starved, and in want of everything, was a piece of great good luck for the merchants of Teniet-el-Had. We established our camp five leagues from this town, at the foot of the mountains on the frontier

of the Sersous, near the fountain of Ain-Tekria. As soon as it was known that such a famishing multitude had arrived, our encampment assumed the appearance of a great market of all sorts of goods and wares. From Teniet-el-Had came a procession of camels, laden with potatoes, onions, and eatables of all kinds, while oxen followed with large cases slung over their backs. All around the camp shops were open, under tents, which were ramparted about with the boxes in which the merchandise had been brought. I think I see now those busy and eager speculators, the Jew with his dirty turban, brilliant eyes, and pick-pocket fingers; the European colonist, selling brandy; all clamouring, swearing, and puffing off their goods together, and in haste, whilst the purchasers seized upon what they wanted, without ceremony, at the tariff fixed at head quarters. When the administration had received the fifty kilogrammes of war store, we were on the move again.

“*Small rain beats down high winds,*” says the French proverb; but it takes heavy rain to beat down high winds in Africa; and after the incessant storminess of the climate from November fine weather, just before the sleet showers of the

month of March commence, returns suddenly as by enchantment. We were exactly in this season of the year. Every morning a cloudless sun warmed and cheered us. Our route lay through a beautiful country, and great hunts in the Narh-Ouessel were in prospect. What more was needed to make our spirits light and joyous ?

In the Narh-Ouessel, indeed, there is a kind of natural reservoir of springs of water, extending over about a square league, on a slight elevation, about three feet higher than the surrounding country. All around innumerable reedy plants spring up, forming a haunt for thousands of wild ducks. The waters trickling down irrigate vast meadows intersected by tamarind trees; and it was close to these meadows, where we found wood and some pasture for our horses, that we established our bivouac. In this beautiful spot sporting was our chief occupation. The marshes had the attraction of a promised land to all of us. The Marshal, above all, enjoyed this pastime, and woe to the duck he aimed at ! In the squadron there was a trumpeter, an old poacher in former times—for what kind of character was there not in the squadron ; and the poacher was now quite in his element. He was provided with powder and

shot and a good coursing gun, and returned every evening with a magnificent provision of game. One day, re-entering the bivouac rather more heavily-laden than usual, the Marshal happened to meet him, and in answer to the questions put to him, the poaching trooper told briefly the story of his life. Thereupon a discussion took place on the sports of the field, a subject on which the Marshal was a proficient, but the poacher was no less so. The conversation was so interesting to both the speakers that it was drawn out to a great length, and the Marshal took such a liking to the poacher, that he made him his chief purveyor, and attached him to his person. On what slight accidents do our destinies depend ! A few ducks less, and the fortune of the poacher would have remained unchanged.

The southern tribes, whom the Marshal had been long expecting, at last arrived. For several days their immense flocks of sheep defiled before us. Then came the horsemen, in their white burnous (in the winter the inhabitants of the Tell wear black ones), escorting their wives, hoisted on the backs of camels decked out with woollen camerolles, and hidden from all eyes in great palanquins. These precautions do not always

mean what they seem to indicate. Those tribes who hide their women so scrupulously under great veils, carry, it is said, their hospitality beyond all bounds. Our Arabs greeted us most amicably. They were quite *en règle* with France. They had paid their fines, and their taxes, and were the declared enemies of Abd-el-Kader, of whose presence in the east they assured us. We were consequently to quit Narh-Ouessel, in order to march in the direction of Ouled-Nail; but first it was necessary to revictual. Besides, horses unshod, and men ill clothed, are poorly fitted for service. Towards Boghar, therefore, was our first move.

Boghar, under the meridian of Algiers, or nearly so, rises like an eagle's nest at the entrance of the valley leading to Medeah. Abd-el-Kader had formerly established there a foundry, and other important works. We had converted the town into an advanced post, and a place of halt, refreshment, and repose for the columns operating in the province of Algiers. Without stopping there, we pushed on to Medeah, where we could find all we had need of, and besides, for a time form the cavalry of the little column under the orders of General Molière. It was a verdant and

beautiful valley we were passing through. On the right and on the left rose hills covered with wood. The nearer we approached Medeah the more varied the landscape became. Finally, after having made a circuit round the hills, and round the mountains, Medeah was before us, perched on an elevation which, from the opposite side, ran on into a long table land. Still we had two hours' march before we could reach the gigantic trees which shadow the fountain of the Regulars, and the magnificent esplanade in front of the city, where we established our bivouac.

After so many privations we arrived at Medeah just at carnival time, on the day of the last masqued ball. We had no dress, but this was an additional reason for going to the ball, where every sort of costume, known or unknown, was admitted, except the military uniform. What a delight to come so far, through so many dangers and fatigues, to personate a bear, or a pacha, a marquis, or a porter ! What delicious repose ! to dance frantic dances all night long, by the light of a dozen wretched lamps, venerable and primitive luminaries, borrowed from the ancient saloons of Mars and of Apollo, or like the antique ornaments of the barriers of Paris ! But we had no right just

at this time to be very fastidious. We had been too long deprived of all dancing and music not to find the fête charming, and got up in most excellent taste. The rain, the snow, the wind, the mud, and the dust, had marvellously disposed us to relish white bread, cool wine, and a good warm supper. Yes ; but the next morning ; the order of the commandant must be obeyed, and the order was positive, and our departure inevitable. No matter ; *il n'y a que le premier pas qui coutre.* Once in the street, every one threw off gaily his night's dissipation, and buckled on as gaily his war harness. The cause of our prompt departure was this. Our great enemy, Abd-el-Kader, envying, no doubt, our fêtes and our pleasures, had made a razzia on the territory of the Issers, ten leagues from Algiers, and we were now on the march from the ball-room to give chase to this mar-mirth.

We marched towards the east, in a parallel line with the lofty chains of mountains that skirt the Mitidja, in the direction of the Jerjura. We soon reached the country of the Beni Seleyman and the Arib, passing through delightful vallies, where the river, gliding gently over a stony bed, wound gracefully along between hedges of hawthorn and

laurel roses. Here and there great poplars threw out their long shadows, and naked rocks rose high in the air on our left. The weather was delicious, and the first spring breezes fanned our faces, but we had yet a rough time before us.

All our troops were concentrated in the east. There it was that the insurrection was to be finally quelled. Whilst Marshal Bugeaud penetrated into the mountains of the Isser, his operations were supported by several other columns. All was going on well, but we had not taken into our calculation the return of bad weather. Rain, snow, and hail again assailed us, and we had to march through impetuous torrents and impracticable roads. We shall long recollect the beautiful valley of the Isser. In two days we crossed the river seventy-six times. There was only three feet of water but it was full of ice. Nevertheless, we kept up our spirits, and, on approaching the water, whole battalions would imitate the scream of wild ducks, and make themselves very merry at the expense of the awkward.

In two days we were on good ground. Being well dried round enormous fires, we found our route singularly embellished. By the

industry of the Kabyles all the slopes of the mountain were in a high state of cultivation. The olive, the nut, and trees of every sort had evidently been carefully nursed ; and the villages were as well built, at least, as the villages of France. As we advanced so did the spring, scattering on our path flowers, perfumes, and verdure. We were then on the Oued-el-Aziz ; the river running deeply between two walls of rocks, and, semicircling the camp on two sides, served us as a rampart. Our tents were pitched on a green sward, amid clumps of the mastic tree, so that our bivouac had quite the appearance of an English garden. On the north, an enormous black massive rock stood out from the side of the hill, and the shadows of the sentries, as they marched to and fro, were reflected on the horizon. But how can I give an idea of the deliciousness of the first spring days in Africa ? As the day declines, and whilst twilight is prevailing, stretched on a carpet and exhaling perfumed tobacco, what a pleasure there is in being happy ! Whence comes this plenary contentment ? No matter, all around smiles and charms, the thoughts run back into memory, and forward into hope ; and admiration is over all. The spring sings the happy

songs of youth in the heart ; what a sweet intoxication, without fatigue, without regret ! Thus the hours passed away, thus the nights came on, and our sleep, dreaming or dreamless, was sweet.

The revolt was now suppressed ; every day brought us the submission of some new tribe ; the agitation had ceased ; the insurrection was over ; and this great result was the work of the illustrious chief who had commanded us in person during the last part of the campaign—the work of Marshal Bugeaud.

When the insurrection first broke out like a thunder storm, from the west to the east of Algeria, Marshal Bugeaud was in France. The first intelligence of our reverses brought him speedily back ; and without the loss of a moment, numerous columns, obeying an uniform influence, and in communication with each other, intersected, by his orders, the whole country. Traitors were punished, the feeble protected, and the hottest pursuit kept up against the soul of the insurrection, Abd-el-Kader. We gave him no rest. Hardly had he time to take up a bivouac, when he had to flee before our columns. In vain did the Emir, as his last resource, endeavour to disturb the province of Algiers, the old Marshal, in spite of

the severity of the season, followed him into the midst of his mountains, and hunted him out of this last refuge. Finally, after a year of unexampled hardship and privations, he had the satisfaction of seeing his work accomplished, and peace, so dearly bought, assured to Algeria for a long time.

Such blows cannot be struck, such results cannot be obtained, but by an army confiding fully in its chief, and entertaining for him affection as well as respect. And these were the sentiments of every soldier, of every column, towards the Marshal. Who of us can ever forget his noble figure and his noble heart? In their familiar language the soldiers called him *father Bugeaud!* and they had good reason to do so, for his care of them was as great as his affection for them. Easy, accessible, and communicative, he felt himself in the midst of his troops, in the midst of his family. His frank, blunt speech went at once to the heart of the soldier. Occasionally, in his manners, casting aside his high rank and authority, he acquired only the more respect and attachment on that account. But it was in the hour of danger that his great superiority shone out. At such a time all eyes were turned towards him, with

the certainty of finding direction, precise orders, and, if the peril were great, the safety of all. The King of Castile, a valiant warrior, said in former times: "*Murió el ombre, mas no su nombre*"—(the man dies, but not his name). Marshal Bugeaud is one of the small number who will survive generations; and, what is still better, leave an affectionate souvenir in the hearts of all those whom he has commanded.

It was now time to give a little repose to the troops, after their laborious winter campaign of 1846. We received orders, then, to march upon Algiers, where we were to remain a few days before we returned to Mostaganem. From Medeah we reached Blidah, passing through the gorge of the Chiffa, one of the wonders of Africa, and one of the most beautiful scenes in the world. Fancy a magnificent road twenty-five feet broad, constructed partly on a precipitous straight cliff five leagues in length, by the process of mixing and blowing up great fragments of rock, and partly on a torrent, by straightening its channel, and robbing it of half its bed. Then out of the rocks spring lichens and herbs of all sorts, whilst, in more favoured spots, where the soil has not been carried away, real forests spread their

shades over your head, and the Chiffa, forcing a tortuous course across the rocks, receives among them numerous cascades from the mountains. Presently the horizon becomes enlarged. You issue, as it were, from a prison, and your eyes, dazzled by the sudden light, first rest upon the long hills of the Mitidja, then on the sea, which is visible through an opening of the Mazafran, and then on an immense plain, to which distance gives great beauty. An hour more, and you are at Blidah. Mohamed-ben-Yousef, the traveller, whose sayings still remain popular in Africa, has said of Blidah, "You are called a little city, but I call you a little rose." And this is a perfect description; for Blidah is gracefully situated in the midst of orange groves, whose perfumes betray its whereabouts afar off. The French, they say, have embellished the place. In spite of their embellishments, however, Blidah remains still what it was, the little rose of Mohamed-ben-Yousef.

Finally, after having marched three hundred leagues, and lived six months in bivouacs, we reached the good city of Algiers. The sailor is not happier in the enjoyment of shore after a tempest than we were. It was quite a new birth to

us, this life at Algiers. We were never tired of contemplating the scene before us ; the activity, the incessant movement of the busy crowds, the store-houses, the *cafés*, the journals, reports from France, the letters that were awaiting us ; all this caused emotions impossible to describe. Then there was the secret joy of knowing we had worthily performed great duties ; and then what poignancy past privation gave to present pleasures ! If ever you meet with any one satiated with the luxuries of life, prescribe for him a winter campaign in Africa.

The gaiety of Paris and the charm of the East are to be found combined in the city of Algiers, and this especially on a certain terrace, where one cannot sit without the fancy recurring to the *Thousand and One Nights*. It is there, towards the close of the day, that the inhabitants assemble to inhale the refreshing sea-breeze. The sparkling sea, the white-walled houses, suspended, as it were, overhead, the rose-coloured verdant hills, the mountains forming the horizon, their crests distinctly defined on the clear blue sky, and fading away towards the foot of the Jurjura, complete a scene of consummate enchantment. What a charm there was in contemplating this splendid land-

scape; but it must be confessed that we enjoyed other pleasures too of a more turbulent description. Is it necessary to add that our happiness was of short duration? But such is the life of a soldier. The halt and the march always follow quick upon each other. Eight days after we had entered Algiers we were again upon the move, encountering new perils and adventures.

## SAHARA AND THE GREAT DESERT.

## I.

THE name of the *Rhomsi* is certainly very little known in France; nevertheless the *Rhomsi* are an old family of great renown among the Assesnas, the wild inhabitants of mountains which separate the Tell from the Sersous, not far from the French post of Saïda. This family or tribe are our most faithful allies; and since they submitted to our authority, and pledged their faith to us in 1841, have not once revolted.

Having valiantly opposed Abd-el-Kader, the *Rhomsi*, to escape his vengeance, were obliged to take refuge among their friends, the Harars. Setting out in the night, with a little barley and provision for three days, they hoped to join their friends in the neighbourhood of the Chotts. Vain hope! They were obliged to resume their route,

and, in fear of the enemy, to march only in the night, guided by the stars, across *the sea of hillocks* they had to traverse. Overcome by fatigue, they gave way to sleep, and the next day they lost their way. Without losing courage, however, the *Rhomsi* continued for a long time urging on their exhausted horses to advance. Finally, the little troop stopped, and whilst they were deliberating what was to be done, a horseman was seen in the distance agitating his burnous. "It is my opinion," said the oldest of the *Rhomsi*, "that we should show our arms, and then march in the direction of the Douar. If they are Ouled-Rhelif\* there is no hope for us, for they have seen us; if they are Harars† they will not have far to come to meet us, and will give us a good reception;" and the *Rhomsi* accordingly marched on. But prudence required that they should prepare for combat. And as the horse of one of them was better than the others, "Here, my Lord," said Rhaled to the old man, his father, "mount this horse, he is not yet quite knocked up, and let it not be said that a *Rhomsi* was killed on foot like a shepherd." The horsemen were,

\* A tribe of the Highlands.

† Another tribe, as powerful as the former.

happily, their friends, the people of one of the Caids of the Harars, Mohamed Legras, and were coming to meet their guests.

You may judge by this trait of the pride of the *Rhomsi*, which is shown especially in their hospitality. One day when I was seated in one of their tents, "See you," said one of them, "never did guest put foot in the tent of a Rhomsi, that was not well fed, he and his horse, the next day, the day after, and for a whole week."

In the month of March, 1847, the squadrons of the 4th chasseurs, to which corps I belonged, were stationed, as a corps of observation, in the neighbourhood of the Rhomsi. It was a time, however, of profound peace, and whenever we were off duty, our days were spent in sporting. Rhaled often accompanied us, and one evening as we were returning home, he told us he had just received news from one of his Harar friends, whose Douars were only a few leagues off. "Mohamed," added he, "has the finest greyhounds and the best falcons of the whole tribe; and if we like to pay him a visit, he is sure to ask us to accompany him to the great falcon match that is to take place two days hence." This offer was too tempting to be rejected, so having obtained leave

of absence from the captain, we accepted it without hesitation, and on the next day at day-break were on our road to the Douar.

The *Taleb* (learned) call that indistinct moment which just precedes the break of day, when the night is not night, and the day is not day, *Seheur*. At the season of the Rhamadan, whilst a black thread can be distinguished from a white one, the most rigorous abstinence is enjoined on every good Musselman. Now the *Seheur* is the vanishing precursor of this point of time, and is more easily perceived in a country of vast horizons than any others; hence, according to the *taleb*, the name of Sahara has been given to that region of high lands which adjoins the Tell, the etymology of which word is not therefore the Latin word *tellus*, but the Arabic word *tali* (the last), because the *seheur* is seen in the Tell later than any where else. But, whatever may be thought of these etymologies, the Tell is for us the land of grain, and the Sahara that of pasturage and flocks; or, as Mohamed Legras said to me one day: "The Tell is our father, and she whom he has married is our mother;" or again, according to the saying of the wandering tribes, "We can neither be Musselmen, nor Jews,

nor Christians; we are the friends of our belly."

The first plateaux of the Sahara are a succession of hillocks of nearly equal height, and of an immense extent. They are like billows of the sea, tossed up and stationed immovably on this wide table-land. Between each of the hillocks spring sources of water, which, rippling along the pastures, produce the short thick grass that nourishes flocks of sheep, and gives them that fine wool and delicacy of flavour for which they are renowned. Further on beyond the first horizon of mountains, about twenty leagues from the mountains of Tell, the real Sahara commences. There the traveller, it is said, has spread before him vast places void and naked, arid mountains, oases of palm trees, other far-between spaces where in spring and in winter pastureage may be found, and at last, far far away, that mysterious country, the sand-ocean.

These high plateaux are inhabited by wandering and warring tribes, who every year, when they have laid in their provisions of grain in the Tell, emigrate with thousands of camels and all their property into the southern tracts. But the spring was now coming on, the Harars were

beginning to appear, and it was with one of this tribe, that we were now about to indulge in the pleasures of falconry.

The whole party was ready on our arrival. The horsemen were mounting their mares, those fleet animals, so much esteemed by good Musselmen—for, say the Ulémas, when God created the mare he said to the wind, “There shall spring from thee a creature that shall carry all my worshippers, shall be cherished by all my slaves, and strike with despair all who obey not my laws;” and when the mare was created he exclaimed, “I have made thee without an equal; the good things of this world shall be placed between thine eyes; thou shalt ruin mine enemies; everywhere I will make thee happy and preferred above other animals; for I will put tenderness towards the in the heart of thy master. Good for the pursuit, good for the retreat, thou shalt fly without wings, and on thy back will I place only those who know me, men who pray, and give thanks, and adore me.”

I observed that the right hand of the chiefs was covered by a glove called *smègue*, which had no fingers, and was sometimes made of tiger or panther skin. Here the falcon perched; but there

were often two or three of them, one on the shoulder, the other on the camel hair cords that were twisted round the haik on the head. The Carthaginian fowl, the falcons, were unhooded as soon as the sport began. They flew at first straight up, but their eyes getting soon accustomed to the light, they saw their prey, and pounced upon and killed it in a second. A little further on, the tramp of our horses started two hares, and the falcons were again loosed. Whilst the hare ran it escaped its enemy, but the moment it hesitated, or attempted to retreat, the bird was on its back, picking out its brain and eyes. It is with falcons as with men: some are good, others bad. It was curious to hear the Arabs scold, rail at, and reproach the bad ones; and the pride of the possessor of the best was great indeed. It is during the summer that preparation is made for winter sports. The bird, on its first flight, generally falls into the snare of the falconer. Whilst still wild it is taught to pursue its prey. An easy chase is in the beginning set before it, and little by little it learns to wait for the orders of its master, to recognise his voice, his signal, and the bait, and to pounce upon the started hare, amid the different directions of the falconer, which

the voracious bird eagerly obeys.\* Thus the falcon of the Arab is still the bird of the middle ages, an object of the most anxious attention, and of honour, and of glory.

We admired on this occasion, as we had always done, the address and boldness of the horsemen, and the beauty of their horses; one mare the property of Mohamed, the friend of our friend Rhaled, especially struck us. This mare was so light-footed, that she might, to use an Arab expression, have *galloped on the bosom of a woman*.

On expressing our admiration of her beauty, Rhaled said: "She had a sister who could alone contend with her; they were objects of envy to all, and the pride of their master, when Mohamed was taken prisoner by the cavaliers of the Emir. He escaped however, but hardly had he reached his door, when the chaous of the sultan came in sight. Mohamed sprung instantly on his mare, and when the cavaliers reached the tent, they saw by the loosened picket-ropes that he had again

\* The Arabs, to allure back the falcon, which attempts to fly away, throw the skin of a hare in the air, uttering a shrill cry to draw the attention of the bird. The falcon, supposing the hare alive, pounces on it with such rapidity as often to be down on the earth before the skin falls.

got away. To overtake him seemed impossible. One of them, however, jumped from his horse, and ran up to the other mare, still at picket, when the son of Mohamed drew a pistol and shot him dead. This mare could alone have overtaken her sister ; so the son saved the life of his father."

As Rhaled finished his story, one of the servants of Rhomsi came up to us. He brought a letter from the Commandant of our little column, ordering us to return as quickly as possible, as our squadrons were about to march from Saida. We lost no time in attending to this order, and on arriving at the bivouac, learnt that we were to form part of the column of General Renaud, who was to leave on the first of April, on an expedition towards the Oasis of the South. This we looked upon as a piece of great good fortune ; and, a few days afterwards, when the column, with a long convoy, quitted Saida, we were all quite elated at the idea of penetrating into those regions, of which so many marvellous stories are told.

It was necessary to take water with us, otherwise we might have been without it for whole days. The pure element was therefore carried by several hundred mules; whilst two thousand camels, in a long, unbroken string, ascending

and descending the ups and downs of our route, to the monotonous, sing-song murmurings of their conductors, were laden with our other provisions. On our march we started hares by hundreds, and the drivers, setting up an hurrah at their appearance, which frightened them still more, threw their knotty sticks at them, and hit many. Our greyhounds, however, were more successful still ; and when we arrived at our bivouac, so terrible had been our massacre, that the Arabs could hardly get any sale for as fine hares as were ever seen or eaten.

Two days afterwards, we bivouacked on the banks of the Chotts. These immense salt lakes, though totally dried up in the summer, can only be crossed by a very few passages in April. The day following, at the reveillie, every one was stirring. But, alas ! for many days, the half bellowing, half bleating whines of the camels, whilst being laden by their drivers, had been our reveillie. These plaintive bleatings are one of the miseries of a march in the south. On the other side of the Chotts, we were about to reach the *Bled-el-Rhela*—the Land of Emptiness; but meanwhile, before we had crossed over, the long file of camels, slowly advancing, at long intervals, through

a narrow pass, took “shapes fantastic, more and more grotesque.” Sometimes one saw only immense heads; others looked, in the distance, like ships; many seemed to breathe flames, and to float in the air; and some appeared to march with their legs uppermost, and in constant motion. All this was merely one of the singular effects of a *mirage*, so common in the Chotts, and which those who have not seen them, laugh at as a fable.

Our guide was a robber Arab—one of the Hamians, a freebooter of the highlands. His nose hooked like a vulture’s beak, his black, liquid eye, quiet, impassible face, and thin, bony figure, made him a very good representative, in personal appearance, of the Saharian. He conducted us to a spot where there were wells, covered over with branches of trees, beneath which we found the water pure, deliciously cool, and abundant. The branches are placed over the wells to protect them from the sand, so that we religiously replaced them on leaving, for a well in the Sahara is a sacred place, and all travellers are taught to respect it as such. On, then, and on we marched through the Land of Emptiness. Its solitudes seemed interminable, and are not like other solitudes. They contracted and oppressed, instead of expanding

and elevating the heart. It seemed as if a curse weighed heavily on the country all around. On the right, on the left, up to the horizon, arid mountains, waste plains, no vegetation, nothing on which the eye could rest. But this part of the Sahara had, even with the natives, a bad name. It was merely a passage; the nomade inhabitants of the district never made a stay or a halt here.

At about twenty leagues from the waste we were traversing, a fraction of the Hamians-Garabas, a tribe which had never submitted to France, had made a temporary settlement. The General learnt this by his spies; and as for several days we had never bivouacked in the low grounds, and whilst the day lasted, the mirage hindered the dust raised by the column from being seen, he determined to attempt a *coup de main*. For this purpose, six hundred infantry, with the cavalry and the General, left the main body at three o'clock in the afternoon; we were to rejoin them the next day at the wells of Nama.

The heat was excessive, but men inured to all fatigues fear neither burning sun nor icy rain. At six o'clock in the morning, the column halted, and our Arab scouts returned with the announce-

ment that the camels of the Hamians were at pasture at about three leagues distance. This was a sign that they felt quite secure. But the infantry had been already marching fifteen hours, and from this spot to the wells of Nama there were four leagues more, so that if the attempt should fail, the troops would have a march of at least thirty hours. The General, therefore, dared not, to the great regret of our Arabs, who anticipated much booty, employ the cavalry alone, and orders were given to take the road to Nama.

At half-past one o'clock in the afternoon, we arrived at the bivouac, bringing only six men in litters, and that not on account of wounds, but of an accident. The cavalry being in advance, we perceived, from the top of one of the downs of sand, an immense piece of water like a Swiss lake, with its banks reflected in the liquid mirror. A cry of joy burst from the whole force, and we hastened to the spot, especially to appease the thirst of our horses. But as we advanced, the water continually receded about six feet before us, till at last we found out our error—that we were again the dupes of a mirage. But we did find water notwithstanding, a little to our right;

we had to pump it up into stone troughs, and drank of it abundantly.

The next day, a few hours after we had been joined by the baggage and the rest of the column, a fearful hurricane swept over us. In ten minutes the whole sky became one curtain of clouds, and the thermometer falling, the most stifling heat was followed by whirlwinds of snow. Happily, we were all together. At three feet before us, the darkness was nearly complete, and to get a little light we were obliged to gather, at the sound of guiding bugles, bunches of the broom that grows over the downs, and set fire to them. The next day the ground was covered with snow. It is hardly possible to describe our sufferings during the night and the two days which followed, but on the fourth day the darkness disappeared. The sands of the rocky ground and of the plain drank in, on the first shining of the sun, the deep melted snows. The air remained, nevertheless, icy cold, though we were advancing towards the south, nearing the mountains, the highest passes of which we were on the point of reaching. In crossing these sandstone rocks, we saw from time to time a wretched-looking pistacio tree, and now and then a few violet-coloured heath-flowers. Our

column was now descending a steep slope towards Chellala. But the landscape remained unchanged naked, desolate, and excessively monotonous. Our horses trod but upon the *Alpha*,\* or those dirty-leaved herbs which camels are so fond of.

After the eye has been for many days fatigued with sterility, without finding the slightest object on which it could repose, it is impossible to conceive the joy which a little verdure—leaves, large leaves, a running streamlet, and trees under which one might find shelter from the sun—inspire. For a few days past the heat had been insupportable, and by the time we had arrived at the Oasis of Chellala, we had suffered enough to make us think its fig and palm-trees, poor and scanty as they were, beautiful and delicious. The General received the homage of the tribe, and of the townspeople—if habitations huddled together on the ground, filthy, narrow streets, and a sickly, half-starving population deserve to be called town and people. There, as usual, we found the Jew, the same everywhere. Our stay in this place was very short. We resumed, in less than a week, our march towards Bou-Semroun, an oasis situated

\* A sort of little round junk.

more to the south, which had refused to pay tribute.

To arrive at Semroun, it is necessary to follow a rather broad sand valley. On two sides of this valley rise arid mountains, and parallel to these mountains—a space being between the foot of the mountains and its base—is a huge mass of rocks, in the shape of a reversed shell. A minaret built on the rocks, indicated the neighbourhood of a city, which we found, in fact, hidden from all eyes, behind a little hill. The gardens of ten thousand palm trees, of this town, lying in a narrow ravine, two leagues long, appeared from the high, sandy downs, whence we contemplated them, like a rivulet of verdure between two great rivers of sand. The inhabitants had taken flight at our approach, though in the minaret one might see a good display of cannon and muskets, in the possession of a few fanatics, who were longing to be killed in a holy war, for which purpose they fired on a company of infantry who were just occupying the *Ksour*. The column bivouacked on the south, passing through a town and a marabout, rather elegantly built. Who could have built them in these far away lands? Doubtless, some Christian prisoner; the Greek crosses incrusted among the

architectural ornaments led us, at least, so to conclude. The *Ksour* resembled a citadel; and Bou Semroun, surrounded by a broad ditch and good mud walls, might well set pillagers at defiance, and protect, in its two-storied houses, and narrow streets, the merchandise, granaries, and treasures of its nomade tribes. Happily, the inhabitants had determined not to defend themselves, for we should not have been able to take the fortress without sapping and mining. But we found the gates open, and lost no time in exploring the houses, some of which—those of the chiefs—had more of elegance than we could have anticipated. We had pitched our bivouac near gardens, only a step from barrenness and aridity, and by descending an abrupt slope, we might be suddenly in a scene as fresh and as calm as any that was ever seen. Here, in this magnificent park, for so it might be called, every field was surrounded by a mud wall, to protect the barley, the pomegranate, and the fig trees, and the pasturage of the inhabitants. Here, too, enormous palm trees rose, mingling their boughs high up in the air, and besides, these gardens furnished us with fresh vegetables, and green barley for our horses, without taking into account the palm-tree

canes with which every soldier provided himself, as a souvenir of our expedition. We remained here to our great contentment for a whole week, inventing new pleasures and new amusements; for movement had became so habitual to us that such a long repose would have been otherwise fatiguing. We were glad, then, when in these gardens of the Bou-Semroun, as if we were on a village market place, the trumpet announced a *steeple-chase* for the next day. The general, *the principal authority, the mayor of the place*, was invited, according to ancient custom, to preside at the fête. The whole camp met at the sport; the elegantes came on horseback, the foot soldier with his palm cane in his hand, and the hostess of the canteen, proclaimed the queen of beauty, for the occasion, was to bestow on the conqueror a pair of pistols, which General Renaud had given her for the purpose. The stake was well earned, for never did a chase, even in the palmy days of the *Cross of Berny*, present greater difficulties. Two thousand four hundred meters, going and returning, were to be traversed. Walls, barriers, obstacles of all sorts, branching palm trees, mud walls, and a narrow walled passage to be leapt into, which obliged the horseman to

throw his legs on his horse's neck whilst springing into it, to avoid serious injury. Such was the course. Everything was done according to rule. A member of the *jockey club*, a real member, gave the word for starting in English, and the galloping avalanche flew over all obstacles and barriers. Alas! there was more than one fall, and I can assure you that to be carried off by your horse till your head, in the leap, is under the flying legs of the horse preceding, and in danger of a kick that may at least break your jaw, with other horses' hoofs behind, almost on your head in descending, occasions a rapid stir of blood, and a high excitement, which was the more enjoyed as we had not anticipated it. Killed and wounded, and all, were perfectly well after the chase was over, and much merriment had we in talking over the misadventures of the day. Thus passed the time away rapidly enough, without care, without disquietude; that is to say, we had no sick, and the column was in a condition to go through any fatigue. But as the onions of Egypt were regretted by the Hebrews, we may well be pardoned for having regretted the delicious little onions of Bou-Semroun, when we were ordered to return northward, then to incline eastward, and then

again towards the south, in order to reach Abiot-Sidi-Chirq, a village of Marabouts, celebrated in the country.

Our way was down a steep hill. An immense horizon stretched around us. On our right were lofty mountain crests, in the form of half a horse-shoe; on the left this chain extended eastward; and at the foot of the mountains lay, crossing each other, downs of sand, like the nettings of a great net. Facing us a stony plain, two leagues long, separated us from four villages of the Ouled-Sidi-Chirq, which were connected together by their groves and gardens. In the large spaces which now environed us we breathed freely; the weight was removed from our chests, and our bosoms swelled with I know not what indefinable sentiment of loftiness and pride. A little mosque occupied the centre of the villages. The chiefs of the tribe, whose religious influence extends over the whole Sahara, and even over a part of the Tell, came to meet the General, to offer him their homage, and to pay their tribute.

It was now the 30th of April. For a whole month we had had no news from France. We were more than a hundred and twenty leagues from the sea-shore; the sand of the desert

stretched on all sides before and around us, and it was here, in this country of fable and of mystery, that we were about to celebrate the *fête* of the King. In the evening our little mountain howitzers announced the *fête*, and the next day every soldier did his best to merit the prizes which the General had provided for the occasion. Horse races, sack races, sheep-shooting, and all sorts of games and sports, such as are seen at a village fair, were celebrated with a gaiety and merriment that made the soldier not only forget his fatigues, but France also, and his family and friends, from whom he was so widely separated. Two little negroes, and some ostriches and haiks, which were offered to our General as a present, reminded us, however, of where we were, and claps of thunder\* every day at three o'clock—the hour of prayer—seemed like the echoes of those far away tracts of which such prodigies are related.

It would appear, indeed, that this chain of mountains, against the base of which the last waves of the sea of sand subside, is the barrier placed by God to stop the man of the North from

\* It is a singular phenomenon that every day during the summer, at about this time, there is a storm of wind and thunder at Abiot, which lasts about two hours.

penetrating into these unknown regions. From the tops of these arid peaks, which have only here and there, at wide distances, narrow outlets, the traveller may contemplate those solitudes of sand to which the voice of the Almighty has said, as to the waves of the ocean, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no further." But if the Christian yet, for a time, renounce all thought of traversing the waste, the Arab, under the protection of the Musselman faith, fears no obstacles; and every year, allured by the temptation of gain, numerous caravans cross the desert, following still the same route that we find marked out in the itinerary of Herodotus.

The Arab, generally the most imperturbable of mortals, experiences, nevertheless, when about to traverse the desert, that kind of anxious bustle which takes possession of all men on the eve of a long sea voyage; for, in fact, the passage of the desert is like the voyage of a ship. The same organization and the same discipline must triumph over the same perils. There, as at sea, when the passage is dangerous, a convoy, or a reinforcement from another caravan, is waited for as a protection against robbers; and then the united bands quit their oasis home, and advance

fearlessly together. The respect which a European traveller gains from the natives on his return from one of these passages is a proof that the dangers and hardships to which he has exposed himself are not imaginary but real ones.

By order of our commandant we were now to turn our backs on these endless horizons, on these distant views of the interminable desert ; but the impression their majestic grandeur had left on our minds was not quickly effaced. Often afterwards, under the tents of the nomade tribes of the Sahara, who in their adventurous expeditions come and go like the flux and reflux of the sea, sometimes touching on one shore, sometimes on another, have we questioned these wandering land mariners about the solitudes that had so captivated our imaginations. One day among others I recollect, after the *repast of God* had satisfied the hunger of the voyagers, an old pilot of the desert commenced a long recital ; but it was time to retire to our hammocks before he had finished his story or given us any distinct knowledge of the country. War and its daily hazards separated us the next day, and since, for so according to the Arab dictum it was written, we have never met. This broken-off narrative had but excited my

curiosity without satisfying it, when lately a book written by Colonel Damas fell into my hands, which contains the whole story of the old Arab, and which the Colonel had heard from one of his tribe. In reading this curious journal or log-book, I could almost fancy that I was listening again to the story-teller of the high plateaux ; and having been, with a French column, at Abiot-Sidi-Chirq, one of the last oases of Sahara, I think you will feel as much interest as I did in following the route of this Arab voyager, who, plunging into the interior of the country, will lead you, after six months of incessant marches, hardships, and dangers to the kingdom of D'haoussa, more than eight hundred leagues from the sea shore.

## II.

A CARAVAN passing through Mételli, sets out every year from Abiot-Sidi-Chirq, where our column had bivouacked, for Soudan. This is the road the Arab narrator followed; but before we join him, it will be as well to throw a rapid glance over the country through which we are about to be his fellow travellers.

Africa, from the north to the centre, is divided into three distinct regions. The first known under the name of the Tell, ascends by constantly rising slopes into the district of the high lands. These plateaux called the Sahara, extend from the Tell to the desert, which has about the same level as the sea. The high lands feed innumerable flocks of sheep, and here and there are to be seen fortified towns, depôts of grain, and various objects of merchandise belonging to the nomade tribes. On the east of the oasis of the province of Oran, com-

mences the country of the Beni-Mzab, which contains seven important cities, whose inhabitants are the intermediators in all the commerce of the south, and according to tradition, the descendants of the Moabites. It is certainly a fact that they have all blue eyes and light air, and that their language also differs from that of the Arabs. Though Schismatics, for they belong not to any of the authorised Musselman sects, their morality, union, and good faith are nevertheless generally respected, and, thanks to their activity, almost all commercial negotiations and transactions, not local, pass through their hands.

South of the plateaux of the Sahara, which runs parallel to the Tell and to the sea, the third region of Africa commences, the desert, not the desert of the French imagination, sand, sand, and continually sand—but immense plains stretching far out of sight, without water, without wood, or rather having only water at certain spots, which are necessarily halting places. Doubtless there are sands, and these, swept by tempests, often extend far, when they assume the most fantastic appearances, and are called sometimes *veins*, and sometimes *nets*, according to the forms and likenesses they are whirled into by the caprice of the

winds ; but here also there are oases, whole tracts, like the great oasis of Touat. Beyond these immense plains rise mountains as fertile as the mountains of the north. This is the country of the Touareug, the freebooters of the desert. At the other side of the mountains lies the land of the Soudan, the land of the negroes, of whom so many marvels are related. Such is the country, drawing a perpendicular line from Algiers to Kachna, at more than eight hundred leagues from the sea.\* The kingdom of Haoussa, of which Kachna is the capital, was conquered thirty years ago by a white Musselman race called the Foulanes. Thus, by a singular contrast, whilst a Christian power was establishing its domination in the north, Islamism was imposing its religion and its yoke on the centre of Africa.

The caravan, under the guidance of the Arab Cheggueun, left Metelli, which is nine days' march from Abiot-Sidi-Chirq where the French columns had halted. It set out in the month of

\* From Egypt to Darfour, which is about the same height as the coast of Africa, the country, it would seem, presents the same character. M. Theodore Pavie, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, (January 1st, 1846,) has given a curious analysis of a journey of Cheik-el-Tounsi, to Darfour.

October, traversed the great oasis of Touat and the country of the Touareug, and finally arrived about the month of March in the kingdom of Haoussa, the land of the negroes. Cheggueun, its conductor, the historian of the journey, begins by giving some details with respect to the organization of the band, which under his direction were about to undertake this pilgrimage.

“In the Sahara we call the conductor of a Caravan *khreibir*, for you Christians must understand that we cannot commit ourselves to the waves of the desert, our sand seas, which have their sand banks, billows, and tempests like the ocean, without a chief. All the caravan must obey passively the master put over them. He has *chaous* to execute his orders, *chouafs* (voyans) to explore the country, a writer to preside over his transactions, a public crier to make announcements, a *moudden* to call to prayer, and an *iman* to pray in the name of the faithful.

The *khreibir* is always a man of intelligence, bravery, and many resources that have been put to the test. He must understand how to travel by the stars, and, by the experience of former voyages, know the roads, wells, and the pasture spots ; the dangers of certain passages, the means to avoid them ;

all the chiefs whose territories are to be traversed ; and the remedies against disease, the bite of a serpent, and the sting of scorpions. In these vast solitudes, where there is no certain pathway, where the sands, shifted by the winds, often efface the traces of former travellers, the *khreibir*, to steer his course safely, must note a thousand things. When the night is dark, and there is neither moon nor stars to direct him, the inspection of a handful of herbs, or a bit of earth, which he has to examine by touch, smell, and taste, must tell him where he is, and that without the possibility of a mistake."

Such should be the *khreibir* of a caravan, and such was Cheggueun. The caravan might well be confided to him, for he had three wives, one in the Touat, at Insalah, another among the formidable Touareug, and another at Metelli. He was young, strong, and tall ; he was *master of the arm* ; his eye commanded respect, his speech captivated the heart ; but though in his tent his words were soft, when with the caravan he spoke rarely, and never laughed. Come then, my brave comrades, listen to the narrative of Cheggueun, throw the reins of your imagination into his hands, and believe him when he tells you : "The Soudan is the

richest country in the world ; a slave there is not worth a burnous ; gold is as abundant as silver ; Buffalo and goat skins, ostrich feathers, *sayes*,\* and ivory, may be had for a trifle. The merchandise of the caravans returns a hundred times its value. You are fools, my lads, to stop at Timi-Mount†—a fine voyage, indeed, as long as from my nose to my ear ! If you wish to be rich, come to the country of the negroes. Recollect what the prophet says,

“ ‘ La gale (des chameaux) son remède est le goudron,  
Comme la pauvreté, son remède est le Soudan.’ ”

The love of adventure, the temptation of riches, who can resist them ? In spite of its unknown dangers, the caravan never fails to set out. Those who compose it first purchase their stock of merchandise at the emporium of Beni-Mzab ; then, returning with three laden camels, lay in provisions for the route.\*

These provisions consist of the following articles : a *sai* (a sack of about eighty kilogrammes) of couscoussou, a goat-skin of butter, dried meat,

\* A cotton stuff, manufactured by the negroes.

† A city, a market of Touat, three hundred and eighty leagues from the coast.

two skins of water, a leathern bucket with a cord, to give drink to the camels, two pairs of shoes, cobblers' needles to sew leather to mend them, a tinder box and tinder.

But on so long a voyage it was not only necessary to provide against hunger and thirst, there was provision also to be made against robbers, and the best friends of the traveller are therefore a good gun, a pistol, and a sabre. The companions of Cheggueun took then these arms with them, and also flints, powder, and balls, as a reserve stock, having only on their persons twenty-four charges in twenty-four reeds, which contained their cartouche pouches.\* Each of the band then chose out four strong camels, three for the merchandise and one for the baggage, and it was decided that the caravan should start on Thursday, for the prophet had said, "Never set out on a journey except on a Thursday, and always in company. If you are only one, the demon will follow you ; if two, two demons will tempt you ; if three, you are kept from bad thoughts ; and as soon as there are three there must be a chief."

On quitting Metelli, the caravan met the beau-

\* The Arabs keep their cartouches in the hollows of reeds.

tiful *Messaouda*, (the word signifying the happy) the cheik Salah, and his superb mare. Thus were their eyes delighted by a young woman, a handsome cavalier, and a fine horse. Please God, this will be a prosperous voyage, for God always warns his servants by some presage of the fate that awaits them; but take care, "for he who puts his head into the bran will be pecked at by the fowls."

They were well disposed to follow the advice of Cheggueun, and to place in him the fullest confidence, for he was always on the alert, and at the hour of halting for the night his vigilance redoubled. At the first bivouac, as the voyagers were yielding to sleep, a loud voice cried out, "Hollo! Guards, are you asleep?" It was Cheggueun, who from the door of his tent shouted out. "We are on the watch," replied the guards, and silence was restored. An hour afterwards, the same voice and the same question awoke all again, and so on till day broke.

The caravan continued to advance. As it approached towards the south, the vigilance of Cheggueun increased, and additional precautions were taken. He rose himself frequently during the night to keep the guards on the alert, shouting

out also to any marauders who might be within hearing.

“Oh ! slaves of God, hear this : he who roams around us roams around death !

“He will gain nothing, and will never return to his own people !

“If he be hungry, let him come and we will give him food !

“If he be thirsty, let him come and we will give him drink !

“If he be naked, let him come and we will clothe him !

“If he be fatigued, let him come and rest himself !

“We are travellers on our own affairs and we wish ill to nobody.”

Thanks to all these precautions, the caravan arrived safely at Oued-el-Hameur, the rendezvous of robbers and adventurers. Here vigilance was more necessary than ever, and Cheggueun gave the following directions to the travellers :—

“Speak in a low voice, or don’t speak at all. In this place one may well say, ‘Silence is gold.’

“Tie up the mouths of your camels, and when they lie down do not go near them, lest their

bleatings on seeing their masters should betray us to an enemy.

“To night you must be content with dates. We shall make no fire; we shall not go to the water; the traces of our feet might discover us, even though spies in ambush should not see us; don’t strike any light, the sparks might be seen; don’t smoke, for the smoke of tobacco is smelt a great way off: there are some men who can smell it at two or three leagues distance.

“Prepare your arms and let every one watch, for what do robbers say: ‘Night is the portion of the poor man when he is bold hearted.’”

From halt to halt the caravan reached Guelea, seven days from Timi-Moun, one of the cities of the great oasis of Touat. Here they remained several days resting and refreshing themselves, under the shade of palm trees and in delicious gardens, where the inhabitants came every evening to enjoy the cool breeze and delightful indolence. The natives of this spot are particularly amiable and indulgent. The old men would say to *those of the Spring*, “Go, go, young lads, go and amuse yourselves with the young girls.” Hospitality here is also universal, and just before the departure of the voyagers, Bou-Bekeur, one of the chief men

of the place, invited them all to a farewell banquet.

On asking their host to bring in his son, a child who captivated their good graces by his pretty face and vivacity ; “ he is fast asleep,” replied Bou-Bekeur, and they urged their request no further.

The repast was abundant, and the conversation very animated. There was much talk of Christians and of war. It was boasted that their armies were as innumerable as the starlings of Autumn, that their soldiers were strung together like the beads of a necklace, and that they were shod like horses ; that each of them carried a lance at the end of his firelock, and on his back a pack containing his provisions ; that they all fired together as one man ; that their judges were just ; that their chiefs committed no exactions ; and that before the Cadi, poor and rich were equal. On the other hand, the reproach against them was, that they wanted dignity ; that they laughed when saluting a friend ; that they entered the mosques without taking off their shoes ; that they were not religious ; that they gave their wives too much liberty ; and that they drank wine, ate swine’s flesh, and embraced their dogs.

The next day, at day-break, when about to quit their host, he thus addressed them : "When I told you yesterday that my son was fast asleep, he had just fallen from a terrace when playing with his mother, and was dead. God has so willed it; may he rest in peace. In order not to disturb our festivity and your enjoyment, I suppressed my grief, and imposed silence on my wife by menacing her with a divorce; you have not seen her tears. But do me this favour, attend this morning the funeral of my son, and join your prayers to mine for the repose of his soul." All went of course to the burial of the poor child.

Such is the law of hospitality. A host must banish from his house all grief, all care, every quarrel, every idea of unhappiness, whilst his guests are with him. The prophet, whose words these are, adds :—"Be generous towards your host, for he comes to you with his own property; on entering he brings you a benediction; on leaving he carries away your sins."

From Guelea, the caravan proceeded to the marabout of Sidi-Mohamed-ou-Allal, built in the midst of the date groves which Sidi-Mohamed had planted himself. It was this marabout who said to his followers: "Despise this earth, which is not

worth the wing of a fly, and curse the gifts of *Chitann* (Satan)." Sidi-Mohamed was a man of God celebrated in pious legends, such as he himself was in the habit of relating. Here is one of them which the traveller is sure to recollect, when, for the first time, he makes halt at the venerated marabout, the last resting place of the holy man.

"One day Sidna Aissa (our Lord Jesus Christ) met *Chitann*, when he was driving before him four asses heavily laden, and said to him:

"'Chitann, you have become then a merchant ?

"'Yes, Lord, and I sell so much that I am hardly equal to the work.'

"'What is your trade ?'

"'Lord an excellent one—see.'

"'Of these four asses, the strongest in all Syria, one is laden with acts of injustice. Who will buy them ? the Sultans.

"'The other with envies ! Who will buy them ? the Learned.

"'The third with robberies ! Who will buy them ? Traders.

"'The fourth carries at the same time, perfidies, stratagems, and an assortment of seductions identified with all the vices ! Who will buy them ? Women.'

“‘Wicked one, thou art cursed of God,’ replied Sidna Aissa.

“‘What matters if I am the winner,’ retorted Chitann.

“The next day Sidna Aissa, praying at the same place, was disturbed in his devotions by the oaths of an ass-driver, whose four asses, sinking under their loads, refused to go on. He at once recognised Chitann.

“‘Thank God, you have sold nothing,’ said he.

“‘Lord, an hour after I left you, all my baskets were empty; but, as usual, there was much difficulty about payment.

“‘The Sultan had me paid by his khalifat, who wished to cheat me.

“‘The learned told me they were too poor to pay.

“‘The traders and I bandied compliments, and called each other robbers.

“‘The women alone paid me well and without haggling.’

“‘Nevertheless, I see your paniers are full again,’ resumed Sidna Aissa.

“‘They are full of money, which I am taking to the Cadi,’ replied Satan, pressing on his asses.

“ Oh ! my, brother,” added Mohamed-ou-Allal, “ the free man, if covetous, is a slave ; and the slave is free if he can live upon little.

“ For your abodes choose tents, and for your last resting-places cemeteries ; feed yourselves with the fruits of the earth, and quench your thirst in the running stream, and you will quit the world in peace.”

After a progression of three days more, the caravan arrived at Timi-Moun, where it halted at another marabout—that of Sidi-Mohamed-Mouel-Gandouz—where, according to custom, the travellers deposited their offerings. Here the hungry find food ; but no one eats more than is sufficient to appease his appetite, or drinks more than enough to quench his thirst ; for if he did, he would perish on the road. There are no keepers to take charge of the provisions ; yet there is not a single example of the hospitality of God having been abused. “ And this is in the middle of the Sahara, far from the eyes of men, but God is everywhere.”

At Timi-Moun, Cheggueun conducted the travellers to Sid-el-Adj-Mohamed-el-Mahadi, to whom, according to custom, they gave presents, and then waited, following his advice, to be joined

by the caravan of Tidi-Keult, before they proceeded to Insalah. The country of Touat, which the caravan coming from the north-east had now reached, is bounded on the west by Maroc, and extends southward as far as the great desert, whilst on the east the winding waters of the Djebel-Batten run its whole length. The Touat is a vast succession of oasis, intersected by plains of sand. It contains, say the Arabs, as many villages as there are days in the year. It is inhabited by two distinct races. The Touat people, properly so called, of Barbary origin, and who have intimate connections and alliances with the negroes, inhabit nearly all the cities and bourgs, whilst the Arabs encamp in tribes under tents. Timi-Moun is the capital of one of five circumscriptions; it is fortified and divided into nine quarters; it has seven great squares, and every street is devoted to some particular species of commerce. Exchange transactions are there carried on to a considerable extent.

After eleven days, the caravan of Tidi-Kault arrived. The two *Khrebirs* then assembled their passengers, when, opening the book of Si-Abd-Allah, and raising it to the height of their heads, "Swear by this sacred book," said they, "that

each of us is brother to all; that altogether we make but one and the same fusil; and that if we are killed, we shall be killed all by the same sabre;" and the oath was taken heartily by all.

The departure was fixed for the next day. On the road, a traveller, named Mohamed, who had drunk water from the goat skin, without exposing it for a moment to the air, in a cup, was seized with a violent fever and diarrhœa. Cheggueun was consulted. He gave the sick man a decoction of *henna*, which brought him almost immediate relief, saying, whilst he was administering the medicine, "You must know how to endure thirst, when on a voyage. Drinkers do not go far. They are like frogs; they are not long out of water before they die. They should not come into a caravan, for they are but food for jackals, and birds of prey."

In the neighbourhood of Insalah the caravan of Tidi-Keult was in its own country, and the merchants belonging to it treated the travellers from Metelli as their guests. Insalah is a town of about five or six hundred houses, with a ditch, but without a wall. There is a fountain in the centre, called the *Fountain of the Son of Jacob*. On the south are orchards, and date groves, but on all

other sides, sand, drifted by the winds, lies in heaps, even at the foot of the houses. At Insalah, Cheggueun rejoined one of his wives. She was a young girl, of mixed blood, *gilded like the sun*, and shaped exquisitely; her eyes were black as the *night, without moon and without stars*. Whilst her husband was absent she lived with her father.

Another caravan was here awaited—that of Amedry. It would bring a reinforcement of one hundred and fifty men, and six hundred camels. On its arrival, the merchants of all the united caravans begged Cheggueun to put himself at their head.

“Oh, my children,” replied Cheggueun, “I will willingly be your Khrebir, and, please God, will lead you in a good road, where neither you nor your camels will hunger nor thirst. I will take care of you. I will take you, too, safely through the country of the Touareug; but you know that they are unjust, proud, and strong, and you must flatter them. Do not forget the proverb :

“If one whom you want to serve you, be mounted on an ass, cry out: ‘What a splendid horse that is of yours, my lord!’ They are greedy, they are wicked; you must buy them; these expenses are your affair. But listen to me: when I say, by a wink of my eye, ‘give’—prepare a

present ; when I say, 'watch'—open your eyes and your ears. Return to your camp, finish your preparations, and return in two days ; on the third we shall set out."

The caravan progressed through the sands as far as the chain of Djebel-Mouydir, a succession of sandy and stony hills of no great elevation, intersected by ravines and little plains, most of them watered by sources. This chain extends to the mountains of Foucas on the east ; and on the south to the mountains of Hoggar, the country of the Touareug.

The Touareugs, commonly called *the veiled*, have been from time immemorial thickly scattered over the inhabited country, from Sahara in the north to the Niger in the south, and from the ocean sand on the west to Abyssinie in the east. They shave their faces and moustachios, and wear their hair so long that they are often obliged to bind it up in tresses. A long *chechia*, whence depends a veil of black silk that falls over their faces,—for they say such a people as we should not show themselves—covers their head. Their arms are a long lance, an iron bar, javelins of six or seven feet long, the points of which are stuck over with crooked nails, which they carry in bundles before their *mahari*

(thorough-bred camels), a round shield attached to the left arm by leathern belts, and a poignard that never leaves them night or day, kept in a sheath in front of the left arm, and so attached by a cord that its handle is always at hand. A few of the chiefs alone have guns. All these arms are formidable; but the best of all is the sabre, the sweeping sabre.

“Balls and the fusil often deceive—

“The lance is the sister of the Cavalier, but she may play him false.

“The buckler is around him who is beset with dangers.

“But the sabre! the sabre, when the heart is as strong as the arm, is the weapon of the Targui.”

Thanks to the Cheggueun, who had also in this region a wife and children, the caravan passed the defiles, camel after camel, in a lengthened chain safely. Protected by Ould-Biska, the chief of this valiant tribe of pillagers, they traversed also the whole country of Touareug without molestation, admiring the beauty of its limpid waters, and the sheep without fleeces, and with tails draggling on the ground, but trembling all the while at the terrible stories they heard about the Touareug. One of these, the story of Ould-

Biska himself, will furnish a good specimen of the wild manners of this tribe:

Kreddache who, before Ould-Biska, was the chief of the Touareug, was killed in battle by Ben-Mansour of the tribe of the Chambas. When this was known, there was a great mourning in Djebel-Hoggar, and every noble pronounced this oath : "May my tent be destroyed if Kreddache be not avenged." Now Kreddache left behind him a wife, stately, and beautiful, and valiant of heart. Often had Fetoum followed the cheik in his razzias, animating the combatants by voice and gesture, and enduring like a man fatigue and thirst. According to law she had the right to command till her son should become of age ; but any one whom she might marry would have joint power with her ; and all sought her hand. One day, when a council was held, she said "Hear me, my brothers, he who brings me the head of Ben-Mansour shall have me for his wife." And on that very evening when all the youth of the mountain, fully armed, saluted her before their departure, saying "To-morrow we start to fetch you your wedding present," she added "and I will accompany you."

Ould-Biska commanded the troop. For long

days and long nights they marched towards the north, where the Chambas had retreated. They arrived at ten o'clock at night, at the place of encampment, and hid themselves in the ravine from sunset to sunrise.

The night following they resumed their march along the plain; the long trail of these *Maharis* was hastening them quickly forward, when at midnight, they heard before them the barking of dogs; and a moment afterwards, by the light of the stars, fifteen or twenty tents appeared at the foot of a hill.

“That is the Dona of Ben-Mansour,” said the guide to the chief. Ould-Biska then uttered the signal cry, and all Touareugs, taking up the fearful shriek, rushed upon the tents.

The sabre drank blood for a whole hour. Of all the Chambas, five or six only escaped, one of the fugitives being pinned to the earth by the lance of Ould-Biska.

On the morning of the next day Fetoum had all the torn and tumbling tents ransacked. Under each were many corpses: old men, women, and children, in all sixty six were counted. By some special care of Providence, a poor child of from eight to ten years old had not been

massacred; a Targui had discovered him in a fallen tent between two goat-skin bags. The child was not wounded, but he was covered with blood.

“Do you know Ben-Mansour?” asked Biska.

“He was my father.”

“Where is he?”

“If he be dead, he is behind that thicket; he was flying with me when one of you struck him, and he fell.

“All this blood is his,” added the child, weeping, and showing his bloody burnous.

“Fetoum, I am the man who have killed him!” cried out Biska. “My brethren,” added he, addressing the Touareugs who were pressing round Fetoum, “we have made ourselves many enemies this night; let us spare this child; one act of generosity may provoke another.”

“At the same moment two *Soukmarem* (a fraction of the Touareug) brought in the body of Ben-Mansour, the one by the feet, the other by the head; the crowd opened to make way for it, and then closed in again, the more eagerly to examine the corpse placed upon the sand before Fetoum. Ben-Mansour was a man of high blood and perfectly fair complexion. The lance of Ould-Biska

struck him in the back between the shoulders, and came out at his chest.

Fetoum, motionless, but with compressed lips, fixed a stern long gaze on the body, and then turning to Biska :

“Ould Biska,” said she, “I am your wife as I promised, but take your poignard and finish your work; rip open the carcase of the cursed one; tear out his heart, and throw it to our greyhounds.” That which she ordered was done, and the dogs of Touareug ate the heart of the chief of the Chambas.

It is by the speed of their camels, called *Maharis*, that the Touareug are able to perform their admirable *coups de main*, for, says the proverb:

“The riches of the people of the Tell is grain;

“The riches of the Saharian are sheep;

“The riches of the Touareugs are maharis.”

The mahari is much more elegantly formed than the common camel; it has the graceful ears of the gazelle, the supple shapeliness of the ostrich, and the slender drawn-up belly of the greyhound. Its head is high, and finely set upon its neck, its eyes black and prominent; its lips long and firm, hiding well its teeth; its boss small, but its breast

very protuberant; the stump of its tail is short; its legs from the knee upwards are exceedingly muscular, but, nearer to the foot, tidy and slim; and the palms of its feet are not large and flattened out. Finally, the mane upon its shoulders is very thin, and its hair invariably fawn-coloured—remarkably fine and soft.

The mahari endures hunger and thirst better than the camel. The camel whines pitifully, and thus often betrays a caravan to an ambushed enemy. The mahari never complains. The birth and the education of this valuable animal are therefore matters of great importance and anxiety. The young mahari has always his place in the tent; the children play with him, and he is one of the family. Thus gratitude attaches him to his master, whom instinct teaches him to recognise as his best friend. In the first spring his hair is cut, and he is given the name *bouketaa*, [father of cutting]. For a whole year he is free, and only in the following spring, when he is weaned, takes the name of *heug* [a word from the verb *hakeuk*, signifying he has consciousness]. It is then that his education begins. A halter is put on him which goes through his legs, and he is left picketed till he understands the meaning of this;

that is to say, that he is to remain the whole day without movement, at the will of his master. The *heug* is then subjected to other discipline. His nose is bored for the reception of an iron ring, which answers the purpose of a bit; then comes the *rahhala*, a sort of saddle, with a concave seat, broad back and high pommel, a hollow from bottom to top. The rider is seated in the *rahhala* as in a cup, his back supported, his legs crossed over the neck of the *mahari*, and kept by this pressure itself in the hollow of the seat. The slightest pull at the nose of the animal gives so much pain, that he obeys passively, obliques to the left, to the right, retreats or advances, or should he be tempted by a bush and stoop to eat, a sharp pull at once brings his head high over his shoulders. Finally, when the *heug* will stop suddenly, no matter how swift may be his pace, on his master jumping or falling from the *rahhala*, and when he can make a circle round a lance planted in the ground for the purpose, and start off at a gallop immediately the lance is caught up, then his education is complete. He may then be taken on expeditions; he is no longer a *heug*, but a *mahari*. Such is the education of these coursers of the desert, whose marvellous rapidity,

sobriety, energy, and courage, render enterprises which we are apt to regard as fabulous, easily accomplishable.

The progress was long and painful; finally the culminating point of the mountain was reached. Before the caravan was a steep descent, covered with brambles. To the south was a yellow plain, stretching out far beyond the range of the eye. Then, for the first time, said the Arab narrator, I understood the immense signification of the saying: "Bless the Lord, as far as the sands extend." The next day Ould-Biska bid adieu to the caravan.

After many more marches, through endless plains, where the exercised eye of the *pilot* could trace the road by signs, which escaped the notice of every one else, the travellers attained mountains, which they had long seen as blue points on the distant horizon. These mountains are inhabited by a negro population, who are, as it were, the advanced sentinels of the Soudan. There grows in abundance the *hachich*, an intoxicating plant, sold at Tunis and Tripoli; there may be seen trees resembling our poplars, whence flows a white gum, *oum-el-nam* (the mother of the world), a sort of fig-tree, of a resinous quality, which is

burnt as a perfume; and that plant, too, producing a fruit which, pounded in a mortar, forms a paste which is used as butter in Arab kitchens; and finally the *bjadyy*, whose leaves, resembling in form those of a cabbage, give a citron taste to whatever food they may be boiled with.

The travellers were approaching Aguedez, the first great city of the Soudan. The caravan merely passed through it, and had yet many long days' marches before it could reach Kachna, the end of the voyage. Kachna is situated in a marshy plain, is traversed by a little river, and is well cultivated. Many plants, unknown in North Africa, grow luxuriantly on this plain. Kachna is the capital of the kingdom of Haoussa, conquered thirty-five years ago by the Foullanes, a white Musselman race, who have imposed their religion and their yoke upon the natives. On arriving, the principal merchants of the caravan paid the habitual homage to Mohamed-Omar, the *serki* (lieutenant) of Sultan Bellou, who was then at Seketou, his ordinary place of residence.

The house of Omar is a princely abode. Guards were at the door, and an attendant, named Abouky Euzerma, received the merchants.

In the principal court were two black-maned

lions chained up. They looked over-fed, and were asleep, with their heads on their paws. An elephant, whom a slave was feeding with fresh herbs and spring leaves, came up to the visitors freely and familiarly. But they frightened the ostriches, who went off at a gallop, through a lateral gate into the garden.

The *oukil* introduced them at last into a vast saloon called *guidan serki* (hall of reception). *Omar* was sitting on a raised way (*estrade*), on a morocco carpet, furnished with cushions of tanned leather, of divers colours.

The four walls of the saloon were ornamented with skins of the lion and the antelope, with ostrich feathers and eggs, with bows, arrows, sabres, lances, instruments of music, and pieces of scarlet stuff, whilst here and there various birds were painted, or rather daubed, in red, yellow, and black.

On each side of the *estrade*, and below *Omar*, were seated on mats the heads of his government, and his secretaries. Their heads were all bare, and shaven. The chief alone had his hair covered with a red *chechia*. He had on an ample over-dress, striped blue and white, and with very large sleeves, and over this again two burnous,

one sky-blue, and the other red ; his legs were naked, and I could remark that he had no breeches on.

At the doors of the *guidan-serki* were a band of chaous and black slaves, keeping off the curious, and music played in the court.

Twice a day the musicians thus come to do Omar honour—an honour which he alone, in the whole city, is entitled to. In approaching Omar his attendant bowed respectfully to the earth, going through the motion of gathering up dust and covering his face with it ; when raising himself up, he kissed the Viceroy's hands.

As for the caravan people, they entered with the dignity which Musselmen and Marabouts ought ever to preserve. They did not take off their shoes ; and their salute consisted simply in raising their hands to the height of their chest. Nevertheless the *Serki* gave them the best reception, and, at the request of Cheggueun, granted a licence for the sale of their merchandise, reserving only to himself the right to purchase cloth at one slave a cubit. It so happened, however, that he had not money enough, that is, slaves enough, and the great war-drum was beaten through the city, and the army of the Sultan started for a hunt.

In a month afterwards they returned, bringing a multitude of slaves; and as the Sultan was at their head, the chief of the musicians improvised this triumphal song:

“Of all Sultans living upon the earth, not one can stand before thee. Thou art the friend of courage, and the friend of horses.

“No enemy can evade thine arrow. Thou art the child of the buckler, the master of forces without number.

“The arm distant from others is near to thee.

“Ask what thou wilt from the east and from the west, and it is at thy feet.

“There lives not one upon the earth who can escape thy lance.

“He who takes refuge with thee is sure to find protection.

“Thou bathest the feet of thy horse in the waters of Dimbon.

“The bird may fly from morning to night, but must rest at last in thine empire.”

The slaves were now waiting for purchasers. In three days they were sold, and three days were allowed the purchaser to return any, if he thought fit, who might come under any of the following descriptions:—

“He who cuts his ankles in marching.

“He who is too big bellied.

“He who has bad eyes or bad teeth.

“He who is unclean in sleeping.

“Any negress with the same defect, or who snores.

“And any one with short and tangled hair.”

There are some of the negro blood who are never bought; such are the anthropophagi, and the *Kabines*, who are reputed to have the power of depriving any one of his health by looking at him, causing him thereby to die of consumption. This tribe wear their hair bound in two long tresses at each side of the head, and by this peculiarity they may always be distinguished.

The sales were all finished, the purchases all over. The caravan had set out in the month of August, it was at Kachna in the month of April. The time for returning had come, and every one was busy in getting ready for the home voyage. Throughout the whole route homeward, Cheggueun was again a prominent character, the adviser of all, the shield of the weak, the support of the strong. It was necessary to keep the sharpest look out upon the negroes. Until the caravan arrived at the middle of the great desert there

was always an apprehension of their escaping. Some of them on two occasions broke their chains, when the caravan was traversing mountainous tracts thickly covered with brambles. But their evasion, which for a moment they succeeded in effecting, did not end in an escape, for their proprietors had with them some of those marvelously gifted Arabs, who can follow the slightest trace, and interpret the minutest signs. A few grains of sand enable them, they pretend, to discriminate age and sex ; nay, more, they maintain that by a foot-print alone they can distinguish the tread of a woman from that of a young girl.

However this may be, a few herbs and a crushed leaf sufficed in marshes and amidst brambles to put them on the track of the fugitives, the greater number of whom they re-captured.

Suddenly whilst one of these hunts was going on, the *Kiafats* cried out, "Be on your guard, there is a lion in the neighbourhood!" Many a one then thought of his far-away tent, but every gun was loaded, every trigger cocked. "The feet of the lion always follow the feet of negroes," added the *Kiafats* ; "be men, for the wild beast cannot be far off." The travellers then advanced in close order and in perfect silence, the *Kiafats*

in front. "There he is!" they cried out, retiring to the rear; and the party saw an enormous lion sleeping at the foot of a tree, in which a negro with a chain on one foot had hidden himself. His companion or rather the remains of his half-devoured companion lay underneath. The camels at first took fright, but became suddenly quiet, for by the time the travellers had crept softly, for fear of awaking the brute, up to the place where he had been seen lying, he had disappeared; the trembling negro remaining in the tree. Not having been able to break their chains the poor slaves had not been able to continue their flight, and when attacked by the lion both had sought refuge in the tree. But one of them was not sufficiently active, and the lion springing on him when he was half way up, tore him down, and, after devouring him in sight of his companion, laid himself down to sleep.

This was not the last adventure on the home voyage, and it required all the experience of Cheggueun to take safely into port the large company whom he commanded as absolutely as a captain of a vessel does his crew.

Do you recollect that enchanting symphony you heard at Paris some few years ago? The east

and its perfumes, the desert and its naked majestic grandeur, seemed pictured to the imagination in its expressive notes. This narrative of M. Daumas leaves the same impression. The primitive character of the country and of its Arab inhabitant are there imaged in perfection; and when one comes to the last page one exclaims internally "What, no more?" The narrative, to be sure, contains other matter very learned and very curious relating to commerce, and the traffic in, and treatment of slaves among Musselmen; but throughout the whole voyage the poetry of the desert predominates. One lives with Cheggueun the life of an Arab voyager, partaking of all his perils, his hardships, and his enjoyments. I know only one Saharian song which depicts with the same truth, the wandering life so dear to the tribes of the high plateaux. These verses of Saharian psalmody struck me as a natural epilogue to the recital of the *Khrebir*.

On a vast plain is the wandering Arab encamped,  
Nothing troubles the silence around him,  
He hears not in the day but his camel's hoarse moans,  
At night the cry of the jackals and the angel of death.  
His house is a piece of out-spread cloth,  
Fastened to the sand by pointed bones.  
To be ill! his remedy is exercise.

Will he regale himself and his friends ?  
He chases the ostrich and the gazelle.  
The herbage, which God makes grow in the fields,  
Is the pasture for his flocks to feed on.  
Under his tent he has his dog always near him,  
Who warns him of the approach of the robber.  
His wife is with him, and her clothing is simple—  
A necklace of pieces of coin,  
Grains of coral, and buds of clover.  
He has no other perfume than pitch and tar,  
And the musk dung of the Gazelle ;  
Nevertheless is the Musselman happy.  
He glories in his lot, and blesses his Creator.  
The sun is the hearth at which I warm myself ;  
The light of the moon is my torch ;  
The fruits of the earth are my riches ;  
The milk of my camels is my aliment ;  
The wool of my sheep clothe me ;  
I lie down whenever the night overtakes me ;  
My house cannot fall ;  
I am sheltered from all the caprices of the Sultan  
Sultans are as capricious as children,  
And have lion's claws ; trust not to them.  
I am a bird of passage ;  
Like it I carry no provisions with me ;  
I sow not, I reap not,  
And God provides for my subsistence.

## PROVINCE OF ORAN.

## GENERAL DE LAMORICIERE.

## I.

THREE o'clock had been just announced by the helmsman on board the *Charlemagne*, which was going ten knots through the water, on a fine night in the month of November, tracing a track of fire through a sea-like mirror, when the sailor called out that the light-house of Oran was in sight. Immediately every one was on deck delighted at the near prospect of quitting his floating prison, and the excellent Captain Arnaud—for whilst the world stands, the officer accustomed to a land life will prefer his horse to the solid planks and capricious bounds of a vessel.

Two hours afterwards we entered the bay of Merz-el-Kebir, which the sun was brightening up with its first rays. Having been on leave of

absence for two months, it was pleasant once more to look on those hills, on those mountains, those horizons, so familiar, so well known to us all, and so full of souvenirs, but also such a magnificent spectacle ! There was not a breath to stir the air. The shades of night were gradually disappearing from the mountains. First came in sight the houses of Merz-el-Kebir, standing out from the walls of the old Spanish fortress: then the dismantled tower of St. Michel, and the range of mountains which for the space of a league runs along the bay, separating the port from the city of Oran, and at last the fort St. Gregory, proudly posted half way up on the right, at the foot of Santa-Cruz, an eagle's nest on the summit of a naked mountain ridge, which looks over town and country for miles round. Under the cannons of the batteries of St. Gregory, the streets of the city wind along the sides of the hill, stopping at the walls of Chateau Neuf, a vast structure raised opposite St. Gregory, by the soldiers of Philip V. On the east, on the line of sea-beaten cliffs, the eye may discover a mosque, the barrack of the African chasseurs, and built by them ten years before; further on, on the shore opposite Merz-el-Kebir, the bare declivities of the moun-

tain of Lions, and on the horizon the rocks of the Iron Cape. On all these hills, and all these mountains, there is not a tree or a plant to be seen. At the entrance of the Oran ravine there is, however, a little spot of verdure just visible, and no more, at the angle of the mountain of Santa-Cruz. There is, too, a village of white houses, in the midst of gardens, standing out, as it were, at the foot of the mountain of Lions on the sea shore. Light vapours softened the angular contours of this grand scenery, of which the breeze brought us all the morning perfumes.

Leaning over the ship's sides, we contemplated for a time this enchanting panorama. The cries of the Maltese, disputing for the baggage of the passengers, soon recalled us, however, to practical realities. Happily we had not the annoyance of superintending our own disembarkation, for the commandant of the port put his boat at the disposal of the military governor of the province, whom he thought on board; and as we were ordnance officers of General de Lamoriciere, who had gone to Algiers to receive the instructions of Marshal Bugeaud, we made no scruple in profiting by the mistake. A few vigorous strokes of the oar sufficed to put us on shore.

There is an hour and a half's march between Merz-el-Kebir and Oran. In the time of the Spaniards, and during the first years of our occupation, one could only reach the city by following a narrow path ascending across St. Gregory, which is four hundred feet higher than the houses of Oran. This path was exceedingly dangerous, for if your horse or mule stumbled, there was risk of being precipitated headlong into the sea. But all this has been remedied. The soldiers of the garrison of Oran, on their return from an expedition, laying down their muskets, took up the spade and the pickaxe, and, under the direction of engineer officers, cut a large commodious road through the side of the mountain, where our jaunting cars (*char-a-bancs*), without being under any anxiety about pedestrians and droves of asses, might rival in swiftness the hundred little open carriages we met, and which at the report of the signal gun of the French courier, were hurrying passengers to embark. Our two ponies, who only went the faster for their thinness, soon brought us to Chateau Neuf. It was there that we were to wait for General Lamoriciere. When one chooses a house, it is the usage in this country to take possession simply by saying, "I

live here." The General had complied with this custom, and had taken Chateau Neuf for his abode; but if any one had wished to know where, for the last six years, he had passed his nights, he would have been obliged to make his inquiries at all the bivouacs of the province.

## II.

THE peace, which had been so violently disturbed by the great revolt of 1845, was again completely re-established. The tribes had again sued for mercy, and, according to a prevalent saying in this country, a woman might have traversed the province of Oran, erewhile so rebellious, with a crown of gold on her head, in perfect security. The work of war over, and tranquillity maintained by a firm and vigilant commandant, the thoughts of all turned towards colonization. Ministers, generals, deputies, all dreamed but of colonization, great or small, military or civil, undertaken by private companies, or by the state. In a word, all systems were on their trial, but at Oran, colonization through individual industry was most in honour, and as soon as General Lamoriciere had returned from Algiers, all his attention was given to grants and grantees.

It is not known in France, either, what was or what is the situation of a General Officer commanding a province in Algiers ; he is a second Providence. Absolute master of the Arab country, his will domineers, everything yields before his orders ; and his authority and influence among Europeans is not less powerful ; in many cases his decision has the force of law ; his recommendation has always the greatest weight, and on him depend that peace and security, which can alone guarantee the welfare of those who come to try their fortune in a new country. Thus the commandant of a province has not merely military matters to occupy his mind—every new project is submitted to his examination ; and he must take the lead in all things, originating and encouraging every measure he may deem essential to the prosperity of the country. At the same time a man of war and of peace, accessible to all, his hours passed in incessant labours, he leaves the council table only to mount on horseback, and ascertain that all is going on right, either by visiting the Arab country, and communicating with officers in charge of posts, or by receiving the complaints of the native chiefs, or by superintending and encouraging the works of the colonists.

It was General Lamoriciere's purpose, as soon as he had got some urgent business off his hands, thus to visit the whole province of Oran. Crossing first the plain of the Sig, and a new village, his plan was to proceed to Mascara, and thence to Mostaganem, and to return to Oran, along the sea-side, by Arzew, the Salines, and the Prussian villages of the mountains of Lions. Afterwards, on a second tour, his intention was to make a like visit to the whole west of the provinces. Meantime, not being yet in readiness for these excursions, we found plenty of occupation at Chateau Neuf.

Chateau Neuf, which is called by the Arabs the Red Fort, or Bordj-el-Hameur, has the form of a vast triangle, with its base on the north, towards the sea, whilst on the east it overlooks the country, and on the west the city. In this immense inclosure, buildings, magazines, and barracks have been erected, either by us or by the Spaniards; and there, as in all places, where that people have formed establishments, there are traces of grandeur to be seen which recall the time of their proud dominion. At the extremity of the loftiest point of the triangle is the Bordj-el-Hameur, properly so called, the former residence of

the Beys, and the abode of the General. To reach this building one must ascend a rather steep slope, and pass under a vaulted gateway in a narrow court, shadowed by mulberry trees. At the bottom of the court an arched gallery of Moorish architecture leads to the grand saloon, which the Beys constructed after they had taken possession of the city. Under the arches to the right, a low door opens on a little garden, sheltered from the west wind by a wall of garden trellises. Here beautiful flowers and creeping and climbing plants, of all sorts, shed their odours over the Kiosque, where the Pachas had been wont to come, to enjoy the repose they so delight in, contemplating at the same time the whole city, stretched out on wavy hillocks beneath them. On the same side as the little garden gate, there is a trellis of vines running up the side of a building, the interior court of which, being surrounded by the arches of a narrow gallery, has quite the appearance of an ancient cloister. It was there that the staff had their *bureau*, and the officers of the ordnance were lodged. At rare intervals of leisure, these officers might walk on a vast vaulted terrace, underneath which we had established a barrack. From this terrace might be seen the shores of the

bay, its caverns doing duty as custom-house magazines, Merz-el-Kebir, and the open ocean. The whole scene had the mixed Arab and Spanish character strongly impressed upon it; and now French activity was giving it an additional new aspect. For, indeed, no time was wasted at Bordj-el-Hameur; the General set the example, and the night was often far advanced when we retired to rest.

According as our turn of service came round, we received those who came to speak to the General, to whom, from press of business, he could not give audience. Every one had his particular occupation. Mine was usually that of writing from dictation. In the morning General de Lamoriciere gave his orders; then we met again at breakfast, where many took their place, who had come on particular affairs to Chateau Neuf; for the General's table was always ready to receive as many guests as fortune might send him. After breakfast, we passed into the immense Moorish saloon, of arched and sculptured marble; and whilst smoking cigars, without end, the General would here converse with the commanding officers, who had anything to communicate to him. The chief of the staff, Colonel Martinprey,

would then present himself. No one in the whole army was more respected than the Colonel. His uprightness, his courage, and his benevolent heart, which was as firm as it was kind, had gained him the affection of all. It was pleasant to hear his grave words, which were always listened to with deference. He was one of those grand figures that recall the warriors of past times. When the General had dismissed his staff, he examined the manifold questions that were put before him, or wrote out or discussed projects, which either he himself had proposed, or which had been proposed to him. He then sometimes mounted on horseback, for an hour's gallop. In the evenings, when not on duty, we thought ourselves free to indulge in any little private escapade; but we often reckoned without our host, and were kept at work till midnight, finishing some memoir, or getting some project in readiness for trial.

Such was the life that was called *the repose of Oran*. But thanks to this incessant activity, and to the prompt rapidity of his intellect, General Lamoriciere, whose line of conduct was at this time well marked out, executed, or put in course of preparation many useful projects. He gathered

information and listened to suggestions on all sides, and allowed any one to tell him, and to prove to him, that he was wrong, when he indulged in the brilliant paradoxes to which his enterprising temper was not a little prone. We all of us lived together in the most intimate harmony. The oldest and most tried friends of the general, such as the commandants Illiers and Bentzman—the philosophical captain, as we called him—were the first to join in our amusements. The captain good-naturedly allowed us to rally him on his favourite subject, political economy, and the grave meditations thereupon that sometimes carried him up into the clouds. Thus passed the hours rapidly away, and yet we sighed over this monotonous peace, which seemed as if it would last for ever. Doubtless our social meetings and occupations at Chateau Neuf were pleasant, but we should have preferred nevertheless incursions into some unknown country, and bivouacking amidst enemies' balls. This was the opinion also of two native officers, two *Douairs*, attached to the person of the General. One of them, Caddour-Myloud, an out-and-out fox, knew better than any *shearer of Arab sheep*, how, as the proverb says, to *fish in troubled waters*; but his cunning,

his intelligence, his knowledge of men and things in the country, and the numerous services he had rendered and still rendered us, gave him a long tether of impunity for his misdeeds. The other Ismäel-Ould-Caddi, was one of the bravest of the Douairs. He was the nephew of Mustaphaben-Ishmäel, whose renown has reached France, and a true Moorish Knight, of the same stamp as old Spanish chronicles represent the Abéncérages of Grenada, so valiantly the foremost in danger. One of these heroes, then, from the love of the smell of powder, and the other longing for prey and plunder, desired as much as we did to hear the sound of bullets. And partially to content us all, an order was given in the month of December, 1846, to hold ourselves in readiness for a march. But our expedition was not a very perilous one. The General treated us like children, giving us just "a-rub-a-dub-dub," of the drum to satisfy our caprice. We were only to walk in fine military procession through tracts of country, where, instead of finding rebel tribes to fight with, we should meet but with Arab friends hastening to salute the governor of the province.

Our little troop was soon ready. On the invitation of the general we were joined by

M. de Laussat, his son-in-law, who had become possessor of the beautiful property of Akbeil, ten leagues from Oran. We all liked him greatly. His cheerful and serious temper, and his kind-heartedness as delicate as a woman's, had gained him our most cordial regard. It was with joy, then, that we shook him by the hand, when he appeared at the rendezvous, the court of Chateau Neuf, precisely at eight o'clock in the morning. He was mounted on a bay horse, the only one that he could procure at the moment; but the poor brute was so thin, so transparent, and had such a famished look, that we could not restrain our laughter, and gave him on the spot, laughing heartily the while, the name of *the Apocalypse*. In spite of the bad weather with which we were menaced, we were not, you see, in a melancholy mood when we took the road to Mascara.

General Alava, formerly Spanish ambassador at Paris, when on a visit to Ceuta in his youth, wished to get on the top of the ramparts of the city, to take a view of the surrounding country. An old officer who was with him held him back, and then raised up a hat on the top of a gun, which was immediately shot at from beyond the walls. "Recollect in future," added the officer,

“that as sure as a Castilian shows himself, there is an Arab to aim at him.” So it was for ten years with the French at Oran. Hardly could the cannon of the ramparts protect *Douaires* and *Zmélas* who came over to us during the years of our occupation. The escort of the General was chosen from among these famous tribes ; and the most illustrious of our allies solicited the honour of accompanying the *bou-haraoua* (literally the father of the *baton*) through his own territory. This was Mohamed-Ould-Caddour, the man of iron, with the eye of fire. At the smell of powder, always the first, his arm struck, without tiring, till commanded to stop. But he knew not why he struck, else why had he got the name of *Caddour the Brute*, for *Caddour the brave* would otherwise have been his better merited designation. Then came Add-ould-Athman, *the knight of the black morning*, and El-Arbi-ben-Yusef, *the head of the goum* ; but the son of the brave General Mustapha, who had been struck by a ball in the wood of Flittas, still hardly more than a lad, was better received by the General, and more respected by the Arabs, than any of our native escort. Everywhere on our route there sprung up souvenirs of the Douair tribe, and of the noble General whose son was with us.

At the moment of our departure, a violent west wind swept over the clouds. Nothing after the first league, from the fort St. Croix and the barren ridges west of Miserghin, to the salt lake to our right, and the mountains of Tessalh before us, parallel to the sea, met our wearied gaze, but plains, and stretches of land uncultivated and waste; far from the basin of Oran the olive forest of Muley-Ismaël could not be seen. In the east, near the sea, were mountains and hills, and broad capes of land; but everywhere the prospect was most cheerless. In proportion as we advanced, however, the tents of the Douairs became more numerous; and we soon entered on the fertile plain of Melata, where the Arab labourers trace the furrows, of very slight depth, in their fields, with a plough like that which may be seen in prints of the earliest ages of Rome. Those populous and powerful tribes, the Douairs and the Zmélas, came, originally, if we may believe the popular tradition, in 1707, from Morocco, in the time of the Bey *Bou-Chelaghrham* (the father of the Mustachio) as followers of the Cheriff Muley-Ismaël. They were beaten by the bey of Mascara, yielded, became his faithful auxiliaries, and contributed powerfully towards the expulsion of the

Spaniards from Oran. The Bey, as a reward for their services, gave them the usufruct of the territory of the Beni-Hamer, who were the allies of Spain, and settled them in the rich plain of the Melata, the Beni-Hamer, being obliged to remove to the other side of the mountain, sixteen leagues south of Oran. From this time forward the Douairs and the Zmélas became altogether instrumental to the will of the Turkish power; they were the whip which the conquerors brandished to chastise the rebel tribes, and to gather in taxes; in a word, vassals who, in exchange for their military services, enjoyed certain immunities bringing large profits. They had become the *marghzen* of the province. This word in Arabic signifies magazine or arsenal; that is, the force on which authority depends to carry its purposes into execution.

In 1830, when French conquest destroyed the Turkish power, Mustapha was the cherif of the Douairs. He was the most considerable man amongst them, both by birth and by his personal qualities, for he was descended from Ouled-Aftan, an ancient house of the Mehal, the first conquerors of Africa, whom Turkish policy had taken into the Marghzen; and his reputation for uprightness

was so great that he was known by the name of Mustapha-el-Haq (Mustapha, the Justice). His word was regarded as the best guarantee. Never, indeed, did Mustapha violate it. He had promised fidelity to the Turk, and whilst the Dey preserved a shadow of authority he remained true to him ; and from the time he pledged his faith to us, he kept it loyally to the day of his death.

If you have ever seen the picture of Horace Vernet, *Abraham and Agar*, you have seen old Mustapha. There was in him the same majesty, the same grandeur ; the aquiline nose, the white beard, the two eyes darting out lightning, and looking straight out like the eyes of an eagle ; his look fascinated ; purpose, decision, and courage, were engraved on the features of the noble old man ; and on beholding him, one felt convinced that death would strike him down before he would bend. And such was the character of his life, from the time when the Arab tribes of the province of Oran, delivered from the yoke that had weighed so heavily on them, abandoned themselves to disorder and anarchy. The Emperor of Morocco attempted at first to establish his authority ; but on the representations of France, he recalled the envoys he had sent to

Mascara and Tlemcen. Mustapha and his Douairs had been the last to salute as sultan the *Cheriff of the West*; nevertheless, when in 1832, three tribes, in order to re-establish order and security, had proclaimed the son of Mahiddin, El-Hadj-Abd-el-Kader, the chief of the country, Mustapha, in his pride of birth and race, would not consent to submit to a man of the *Zaouia* (a religious association); and after having twice beaten him whose power we established by the treaty of Desmichels, and seeing his offers to the French General repulsed, and all the losses he had inflicted on Abd-el-Kader repaired by the French, rather than bow before the new Sultan, he dismissed his tribes to the plain of Melata, commanding them to submit, and retired himself, with fifty thousand families devoted to him, into the *Mechouard* of Tlemcen (a fortified place) where the *Coulouglis*\* were courageously defending themselves. In 1835, however, the Douairs made their submission to General Trézel; and a year afterwards, Mustapha, set free by the occupation of Tlemcen, was again at the head of his

\* Sons of Turks by Arab mothers.

brave cavaliers, and commenced rendering us those glorious services which merited, and have gained, the admiration of the whole army.

All the old officers and soldiers of our African columns still speak with enthusiasm of the man of the white beard; and in their recital of past combats delight in describing how the majestic old Musselman, standing upright in his golden stirrups, his haiks floating in the wind, his eyes sparkling with ardour, would cry out whilst firing off the first gun, *Ellog-el-goum* (uncouple the goum), when all his bold band, eager to distinguish themselves in the sight of their renowned chief, would rush into the *melée*. "I have but two enemies," he would often say, "Satan and El-Hadj-Abd-el-Kader." His joy, therefore, was great when in the month of July, 1842, the columns of General Lamoriciere, quitting for the first time the Tell, his horse trod once more on the plateaux of the Sersous. The column advanced as far as the blue mountains, and bivouacked at the foot of Goudjila, where Abd-el-Kader had concealed, as in an inaccessible hiding place, stores which had hitherto escaped our researches. Those who were on this expedition have often related the story of the old

chief ascending to the top of the mountain, and there, like a prophet of the early ages, charging the winds to bear these words to his enemy: "Son of Mahiddin, on this ground is inscribed no name of a Marabout like thee. Conquest has torn it from those whom I served all my life; it belongs now to those who have taken it with a strong hand; it will never be restored to thee who had but stolen it. With my blood and all my might I have aided the French in retaking their property. A soldier, my obedience is due only to soldiers. I have led them to the gates of the Sahara. Now death may come, for justice will soon be done upon thy vain ambition."

A fortnight after this the Marghzen returned to Oran, and celebrated, with much pomp, a new marriage of their chief. Subsequently Mustapha's ardour decreased. His time for repose had come, he cherished his young wife, and was unwilling to lose the life which he had hitherto risked so freely. Nevertheless, in the month of June, 1843, he was on horseback at the head of his goums, and, after a successful razzia, fell, with the column of General Lamoriciere, on the spoils of the *Smala*, on which the Duc D'Aumale had just made a successful attack.

Whilst General de Lamoriciere was returning to Mascara, Mustapha had to gain the plain of Illill, by a direct road across the country of the Flittas. The horses were laden with booty, and the troops marching in disorder, when in the middle of a difficult pass the Kabyles suddenly fell upon the straggling band. Mustapha, always the first in danger, was one of the first who fell ; on seeing this, a panic seized his men. Two cavaliers only were killed in attempting to carry off his body. All the rest fled, spreading terror through the country all the way to Oran, which was at forty leagues distance. After being stripped by the mountaineers, who knew not who it was whose death had given them such rich spoils, the body, lying stretched on a bed of brambles, was recognised by a courier of Abd-el-Kader, by a wound on the right hand, which Mustapha had received at the battle of Si-Kak. The hand and the head, cut from the body, were carried to the Emir, who gloated over this bloody proof of the death of his enemy. He invited even his mother to enjoy the spectacle, but Zora refused, saying, " Such trophies should be buried in the earth, and not carried about from tribe to tribe, like the remains of a vulgar man." On the next day the

headless body was ransomed from the Kabyles, and brought to Oran, where the French army interred it with all the honours due to a General.

Just after his death, the spirit of Mustapha seemed, for a little while, to have abandoned his cavaliers. They appeared to be panic-stricken, but they afterwards avenged upon the enemy this moment of hesitation—for the Douairs are a valiant race, and even their women take a pride in their personal courage. The story of Bedra, who was carried off by Bou-Hamedi, near Ras-el-Ain, in a razzia, is an example of this. Her captors proposed to send her to the tents of a fraction of the Douairs, who had submitted to Abd-el-Kader, but she refused. “Your heart is perverse,” said she; “you have abandoned your own people, and cowardice is your comrade. And you,” she added, addressing herself to the Khalifat, before the crowd, who were astonished at her audacity, “you are like a robber in the night, stealing into a tent like a jackal. The shadow of a warrior would make you tremble; you dare only attack defenceless women; you would have fled before the guns of our cavaliers; you would have fled, but your flight would have been in vain; however deep may be your hiding place, the arm

of Mustapha will find you out." Bou-Hamedi sent this brave girl to Nedroma. A few months afterwards, when a French column was in this part of the country, Mustapha presented himself before the city, and demanded that Bedra, the daughter of the Douairs, should be solemnly brought to his camp on a mule, richly caparisoned, and led by the notables of the place.

Every step we took in the excursion we were now upon, recalled to our minds the majestic figure of Mustapha, whose shadow seemed still to brood over the Douairs; and whilst we were recording his actions, and sounding his praises to M. de Laussat, Ismäel-Ould-Caddi, who knew French, and understood what we were talking about, began slowly to chaunt a rhapsody, which had been composed on the death of the Aga.

"Oh, woe ! woe ! The son of Mustapha rushes desperate into the midst of the goum. He traverses the ranks of the cavaliers, but he sees not Mustapha—Mustapha, the protector of the weak.

"He runs through the ranks, he calls out the name of his father. Alas ! the heroic man ; he who maintained peace among the tribes has left the earth for ever, and we shall see him no more !

“When he put himself at the head of his gourms, when, with rein and voice, he animated his impetuous charger, warriors followed him in crowds.

“Let us weep for the most intrepid of men ; for him whom we have seen in the harness of war, his proud coursers decked with gold prancing under him. Let us weep for him who was the glory of all cavaliers.

“As long as men meet together, oh ! merciful God ! they will shed tears over his death, and mourn for him for hours and for years.

“Brave warriors, lament together ; lament this sudden death, which has shut upon us the gates of hope.

“How has he, so brilliant in glory, fallen into the darkness of death, as if he had never existed, leaving his friends in affliction ?

“As if our eyes had never seen him. Ah ! what a wound in our hearts ! We shall see him no more at our head on the day of combat.

“Warriors, why do you assemble together ? Who can pretend to command you, now that he has gone who filled the country with the renown of his great deeds ?

“You remember the day when he was called

to Fez by the order of the Cheriff ; how he shone among the great of the court—greater than all, by the brilliancy of his actions.

“ All recognised in him the blood of his noble ancestors, and the Cheriff crowned him with honours.

“ Presents of all sorts, all he could desire, was offered him ; horses richly caparisoned, that seemed to form an escort of honour for his own courser.

“ How grand he looked, in the intoxication of triumph, when on the black courser of the Soudan, his saddle glittering with gold, he seemed like the genius of war, or the dragon of combat.

“ Sovereign Dispenser of eternal justice, thou hast taken him from us ; and thus death, oh ! my brother, will make the source of our tears perpetual.

“ Contemplate these arms, these noble spoils, and before this spectacle let your grief find fresh vent.

“ As the boughs in our gardens wither up, after having flourished, so the winds of the tempest have carried him away.

“ He was the glory of our time, but the light of his house is extinguished since he has mingled his dust with the dust of the cavaliers who preceded him to the tomb.

“There is no one now to take the place of the lion ; his friends, in dismay, have only strength enough left to fill the country with desolation.

“God is witness that Mustapha-ben-Ismael was faithful to his word till death, and never ceased to be the model of all cavaliers.”

Our horses slackened their paces at the monotonous chaunt of this funeral dirge ; they seemed to comprehend the sadness of the Douair ; but melancholy did not long keep us company. Our conversations recommenced with renewed animation, and cold and depression were effectually expelled by a little help from the case-bottle of Commandant Illiers. The Parisian hardly supposes when he sees tons of brandy rolling about the quay of Bercy, that he sees before him the best and most prolific encouragement to African colonization. The *three-six*, the modest *three-six* so much despised by elegantes, gives strength to the fatigued soldier, and reanimates the courage of many who might otherwise give way to fear. As for us troopers, we bless it, for without the *petit verre* and its attractive profits we should not have found on the desert banks of the Tlelat a wooden auberge, where on a ricketty table, the industrious Martin, the *maitre d'hotel* of the

bivouac of General Lamoriciere, well known in the Oran division, set out a few French dishes in the midst of the Arab *diffa*, provided in honour of the General.

As whilst we were at breakfast the rain became an intruding party to the repast, we were obliged soon to be on horseback again, with the hoods of our cloaks over our heads, to shelter us from those torrents of big-dropped rain which the clouds of Africa alone can pour out so profusely. Happily, our route lay across the forest of Muley-Ismael. Here the stony ground gave a good footing to our horses, who seemed highly pleased at having left behind them, at last, the soft and muddy soil of the Melata. In war-time the passage through this wood is very dangerous; many sharp fights had we been engaged in there. We passed a little to our right the hillock where Colonel Oudinot, of the 2nd Chasseurs, was killed in a brilliant charge at the head of his regiment. Near a reservoir of water, which General Lamoriciere had had constructed to quench the thirst of the columns on their passage, a wild old olive tree may be seen, covered with bits of rag and surrounded by a heap of stones. It was by this tree, says tradition, that the Sheriff Maroc Muley-Ismael stationed him-

self a hundred and forty years before, when at the head of a numerous body of cavalry, including the Douairs and the Abids, he attempted the conquest of the country. The forest takes its name from his defeat; and every woman who has a husband engaged in war, throws a stone in passing to the foot of the olive tree, and attaches a bit of her dress to its branches, to preserve him from misfortune.

At three o'clock we crossed the wooden bridge, and the drummer of the post saluted with a fine roll the entrance of the General into the village of Sig, which is composed of six barracks and a stone house. As for the other habitations, they were either only about half built, or merely projected, and the few colonists who were not laid up with fever in the hospital, passed their time in disputing and quarrelling with each other. The year before, when the circuit of the village was marked out, there was a general belief that it would prosper rapidly. This part of the plain was healthy, and the soil proverbially fertile. The cannon then woke up all the echoes of the valley; Arab cavaliers galloped along the water courses, firing off salutes at the water, gushing through the channels made for it over the plain; and the

whole population enjoyed quite a *fête* day. The occasion, indeed, called for a *fête*, for under the skilful direction of the engineer, Captain Chapelain, the old Turkish lock had been removed. Nothing could be grander than the masonry of this work. It was more than a hundred feet broad, built of great stone blocks, nearly all taken from Roman ruins, which covered the ground for a circumference of about four thousand meters. The water, running between two rocks, and stopped by this obstacle, overflowed now both its banks into two canals, spreading fertility and abundance over all the adjacent fields. Whilst standing on the little bridge for working the machinery of the lock, hearing the waters beneath tumbling with a rushing noise over the barrier into their ancient bed, you had before you an immense horizon, a verdant fertile plain, hills melting away in the distance, and on the right, at eight leagues from Sig, the marshes of the Macta, and downs of sand rolled out like the meshes of a net. In 1841, the flocks of the Garabas, our enemies, pastured freely on this plain, under the protection of the regular battalions of Mustapha-ben-Tami; but General Lamoriciere, who had just taken the com-

mand of the division, did not leave them long undisturbed.

In the course of the month of December, an Arab cavalier presented himself at the gates of Oran, and demanded an audience of the General. Being conducted to Chateau Neuf, and brought into his presence, he said without waiting to be questioned—"I am Djelloul, my name is known in the country, and all know that I never flinch from an act of vengeance. I have killed men of all parties; at present I come from Abd-el-Kader, and I deliver myself up to you; take my head or my services; revenge is my motive."

"I accept your services," said the General, "and I keep your head to punish you, in case you should deceive me."

"Listen," replied Djelloul, "and you will believe. Bou-Salem, the chief of the Garabas, had a daughter, and I loved her. I asked her in marriage, he refused me; and I have sworn vengeance on him and on his. I have abandoned Abd-el-Kader, and I have come to you to deliver the Garabas into your hands. I am at your disposal, and when the hour of retaliation shall have come, I will let you know."

"Very good; retire, keep your word, and you shall be rewarded."

“The blood of Bou-Salem will be my reward.”

Two weeks passed away, and the General saw nothing more of Djelloul, so that one evening he ordered him to be brought before him. He was found in a Moorish *café*, which he was in the habit of frequenting daily, near the gate of the city.

“Well, have you forgotten your promises?” said the General.

“You are very impatient,” replied Djelloul; “I know how to wait, I do, and yet it is only my vengeance that you are to execute. I am out on the watch every night; when the twenty-ninth night without a moon shall have come, the hour will be near at hand, and, please God, I will lead you where it is my pleasure you should go.”

On the twenty-ninth night Djelloul was with the General. “Let those whom you command,” said he, “be ready to-morrow night; the hour is come.”

The next day the troops were on foot at six o’clock, and the column marched towards Sig. On that day the battalions of Mustapha-ben-Tami were on their route towards Oran, on a *coup de main* expedition, whilst the French force was approaching the tents of the Garabas, “There is the enemy!” suddenly cried out

Djelloul. "I have put them into your hands, and now I am free to pursue my vengeance." So saying, the Arab started off at the head of his cavaliers. When the rally sounded, when there was nothing left to pillage and plunder, Djelloul returned, but the last. "My arm is tired, and I am sated with blood," said he, to Captain Bentzman, "but Bou-Salem has escaped me. Just now, however, on returning, I saw the oldest man of the tribe behind a thicket, and my pistol was already at his head, when the Powerful One sent me an idea. So I said to him, 'You Mohamed, you are the oldest among the Garabas; I give you your life; return to Bou-Salem and his people, and tell them that it is I who have betrayed them. But tell Bou-Salem that my vengeance is not satisfied. Tell him every time he lays his head upon a stone, to look well under it, to see that there is no poignard there.'"

Djelloul afterwards got his vengeance to the full, but being killed in a combat, did not long survive it. The Garabas, having made their submission, now cultivate the plain in peace, and if you ask them why for two hours in the day, and during a part of the night, when the moon shines in all its brightness, the wind raises

regular clouds and whirlwinds of dust, they will answer—"The city, of which you see the ruins on all sides, refused to *confess* the Musselman faith, when the Mehal made the conquest of the country. The prophet, however, sent a violent wind, which destroyed its walls, and caused the death of a part of its population. Since then, once in the night and once during the day, these souls in pain traverse, weeping, the ruins of the city, which are now partly buried under the alluvial soil; and thence come the moans and the groans that are mingled so mournfully with the wind.

It was the General's object to inform himself of the causes that had crippled the growth of a village so advantageously situated. He invited, then, all the colonists who had anything to say to meet him at five o'clock. Never was a spectacle more melancholy than this audience, held in the smoky room of a wooden cabaret. Seated on a miserable joint-stool, the General interrogated with great kindness all these unfortunates, whilst notes were taken at a ricketty table of their names, their families, their resources, and their wants. They all had the same story to tell, there was no one to employ their hands and to remu-

nerate their labours, whilst disease and death decimated their families. Two families, however, from the Pyrenees, had got on pretty well, their fields yielded them profitable crops, they had each a little flock, and all they wanted of the General was a ram. The General took pleasure in listening to them, and said to the woman, "Well, you are happy here; you are better off here than in France?" "Oh yes, General," replied the good woman, "we are doing very well here, but there is one thing hard to bear; it is a sad thing never to hear the sound of the church bell." And, indeed, for the success of a colony in Africa it is necessary not only to think of the body, but of consolation also, which recalls the souvenirs of infancy—the church, and the church bell. The first order, therefore, that the General gave was for the construction of a chapel at St. Denis-du-Sig. One man alone, named Nassois, besides the two families, had done well. He possessed a long, handsome house built of stone, where all the waggoners, who passed and repassed incessantly on the Oran road, were in the habit of stopping, but he was an old hand, having been many years in Africa. Skilful, energetic, and industrious, he turned every thing to account; and who will

believe it? the bank note, thanks to him, had become known to the Arabs, not notes of the bank of France, but notes of the bank of Nassau! A note from him would pass current, from hand to hand, throughout all the markets of the environs, as ready money.

As soon as the General had finished his questions, and compared his notes, his resolution was formed. The little colony, he saw at once, required government; to be placed under some firm positive authority, empowered to decide summarily all disputes, and with resources sufficient to rescue the poor people from the sufferings with which the approaching winter season threatened them. An order was consequently immediately sent to the commandant, Charras, immediately to pitch his bivouac in the close vicinity of Sig, which being done, the soldiers instantly became lime-burners, stone-cutters, masons, and labourers; and a few months later any one who passed through St. Denis-du-Sig, would not have known it; the village was transformed.

A little beyond St. Denis commence the mountain gorges which separate the valleys of Sig and of the Habra from Mascara and the plain of Eghris. It was on a dark night that we crossed

these defiles, to reach the bridge of Oued-el-Hamam, where we were to bivouac. We left behind us the little redoubt, where during the revolt of 1845, a cantineer, an old non-commissioned officer, shut up in the block-house, with only two brave comrades, held out against a body of Kabyles, till he was rescued by a detachment on their march to Mascara. It was raining hard, when, quitting the high road, we, to make a short cut, struck into a bye-path, at the risk of stumbling into ravines; but at last we crossed the famous ascent to which our soldiers had given the name of *Crèvecœur*, and a little afterwards we encountered General Benard, who had come to meet General Lamoriciere, with a great number of officers, Arab chiefs, and the commandant of the place, M. Bastoul, the Solomon of the city. We were now at Mascara.

## III.

THE history of Mascara is connected with the most glorious souvenirs of the province of Oran. In 1704, the Dey of Algiers gave the command of the west to one of his favourites, a young man of twenty-four years of age, named Bou-Chelagrhama, (the father of the mustachio). Ambitious, active, and intelligent, Bou-Chelagrhama had sworn to avenge the death of his predecessor, the Bey-Chaban, who had been killed by the Christians of Oran. Before, however, turning his arms against the infidels, it was necessary to reduce the whole province under his authority. Up to that time the city of Mazouna, situated in the Dahra, between the Cheliff and the sea, had been the residence of the Beys; but being too distant from the centre of the province, many tribes had thrown off the yoke. The first act, therefore, of the new Bey, was to quit Mazouna, and to transport the

seat of the Turkish power to the other side of the first chain of mountains, to a place called *Pays des Querth*, from the name of a tribe who inhabited it. This position allowed the cavaliers of Bou-Chelagrham to take the tribes of the plains of Mina, of Illill, of Habra, and of Sig, in flank, and gave them a hold also on the tribes of the south, who had hitherto dared to brave the orders of the Bey, whilst by the high plateaux of Sidi-bel-Abbes, the communication of the Turkish chiefs with Tlemcen, could take place without difficulty. On the last hills of the chain, then, which commands the fertile plain of Eghris, there arose the city of Mascara (*Aa-Askeur*, literally, *the mother of Soldiers*), which was henceforward, till the Christians were expelled from Oran, the chief residence of the Beys. Mascara soon became a prosperous place.

This city contained a numerous population, but not a very moral one, if we are to believe the saying of the traveller, Mohamed-ben-Yousef: “I drove rogues to the walls of Mascara, and they found refuge in its houses.” But however bad may have been the character of its inhabitants, it is certain that its military position is an excellent one. Mascara was regarded by all mili-

tary men as the key of the country, and when General Bugeaud, having assembled a strong column at Mostaganem, was doubtful whether he should march on Tegdempt, the new post established by Abd-el-Kader on the frontier of the Tell, or on Mascara, there to take up a permanent position, as General Lamoriciere advised, General Mustapha-ben-Ismael, being consulted on the subject, replied, "When the insurrection of Ben-Cheriff (1810) broke out, a grand council of grey-beards, Turks and Arabs, was held. The question under discussion was, "Shall we take post at Mascara, or carry on a razzia warfare against the tribes?" and all the men good at the council table, and good in the saddle, were of opinion that we should establish ourselves at Mascara. I do not pretend to be wiser than they were, and what they said then, I say now, "Go to Mascara, and remain there." Nevertheless, the army marched upon Tegdempt, but did not stop there long. The council of old Mustapha and of General Lamoriciere was eventually and speedily adopted. Posted in this city during the winter of 1841 and 1842, in a city without provisions, without resources, General Lamoriciere undertook and successfully terminated a campaign, which resulted in the

pacification of the province, and struck a heavy blow at the power of the Emir, whilst General Changarnier, the *mountaineer*, as Marshal Bugeaud used to call him, by his boldness and energy, brought the province of Algiers to sue for mercy.

Many people express astonishment at the respect paid to the uniform of the soldier, even in time of peace. They would be less surprised if they reflected that every soldier is the heir of those who have preceded him in danger. It is known also that war in Africa is not war in Europe; every hour is an hour of suffering. In Germany and in Italy war is waged with men, with nations, who recognise humanity as an inviolable law; the wounded are attended to; prisoners are well treated, and, when the battle is over, wearied limbs find shelter, houses to repose in; sometimes even *fêtes* and parties of pleasure re-animate the drooping ardour of the harassed campaigner. But in Africa, the contest once commenced, there is no more repose. The enemy is invisible, and is everywhere. Marches by day, marches by night, cold dews and burning suns, and in the winter sleet rains pouring on, and soaking through you for weeks together. Then, to support the body under these fatigues, the

nourishment is insufficient, and you are obliged to carry it with you ; whilst to raise the spirits, to keep up the heart, there is nothing, absolutely nothing—always the same faces, always isolation. For whole months you may not hear one friendly word, or meet with one encouraging look. And the recompense of all these sufferings, of all these fatigues, will be neglect, oblivion. They will remain unnoticed, unknown ; the same burthens, with less strength to bear them, will continue perpetually, till the soldier, utterly broken down, would fall a prey to the barbarity of tribes whom instinct for blood makes like wild beasts, if the General did not, when he can bear no more, relieve him by a change of quarters. In an African war, too, a glorious death in battle gives no assurance of repose ; sometimes even in the heat of battle a shudder will seize upon the boldest ; for in the midst of the shouts and shrieks of the savages around him, the image of his headless body, a hideous trophy, to be outraged by the women and children of the enemy, will pursue him. To endure such a life, and to rise above it, requires troops so devoted to their chief that nothing can discourage them. So that if success has crowned our arms in Africa, we owe it certainly

to the enduring character of our soldiers, and to that energetic gaiety that led them to make a jest of their privations and hardships. The campaign which followed the occupation of Mascara may give some idea of these sufferings, and of the heroic determination with which General de Lamoriciere knew how to inspire his troops.

The climate in this part of the country is, during the winter, dreadful—snow, rain, hail, winds, all the inclemencies of the sky together, and in certain tracts, the want of wood besides. When the division took possession of the conquered city there was not a house whole, not a shelter. Those most tenantable were put first in repair for store-houses and hospitals, as it was of urgent necessity carefully to preserve the small stock of provisions we had brought with us. The place could not be re-victualled before four months, and we had but one month's provisions. “Never mind,” said General Lamoriciere, “the Arabs live and keep the field: we will live as they do, and beat them;” and as he said, so he did. The flock brought from Mostaganem was carried off the first time they were driven out to pasture; but night forays and rapid razzias soon furnished meat for the soldiers. Our biscuits were very

economically served out, but there was corn in the country, buried, it is true, in subterranean granaries, which the Arabs call *silos*. We could discover them, however, and our portable mills enabled the column to make their own flour and bread, and so to protract our *sorties* through the winter. When the reports of the spies informed us of the whereabouts of any *silo*, the manner in which the soldiers went to work to discover exactly where it was was really a sight to see. They would prick the soil with their ramrods, first trying one place, then another, till the ground yielding to the fortunate ramrod, the precise spot where the treasure was buried was found out. The fortunate soldier then received ten francs, and the regular distribution commenced, for corn represented, in the hands of the intendant, many sorts of provisions: rice, sugar, coffee, biscuit, and I know not what besides: corn-rice, so many pounds; corn-sugar, so many pounds; then the mills were in movement, and the flour was metamorphosed into cakes between two *porringers*, which answered for an oven when there was no time to scoop one out of the earth, which a few hours sufficed to do. This no doubt was a hard life, and I suspect that the dandies of the *Café de*

*Paris* would hardly have been content with the fare of the column at Mascara. But there is an intoxication in success, and nothing makes one support fatigues better than the complete success of a *coup de main*. And as our spies were well paid, and our information very correct, our *coups* rarely failed.

Every day after dinner General Lamoriciere personally questioned the prisoners. One evening a prisoner was brought before him, who as soon as he entered the room squatted himself down on the ground, when suddenly raising his head, he cried out, fixing his eyes on the General, “*Enta bou chechia, enta bou haraoua*,” with gestures expressive of the utmost terror. To explain this, you must know that when M. de Lamoriciere commanded the Zouaves in the province of Algiers, he always wore the *chechia*, a Tunisian head dress, which had gained him the name of the *father of the chechia*, as in the province of Oran he had that of the *father of the baton*, or, more correctly speaking, *father of the cudgel*. Now this prisoner had been the cook of a battalion of regulars in the service of the Emir, he had known the General in the province of Algiers, and was struck with terror on recognising in the *bou haraoua*, of whom

all the Arabs in the country spoke, the *bou chechia* of whom he had stood in so much awe.

“I know you,” said the prisoner, after a moment. “Do you recollect my having brought you a letter at the Wood of Olives?”

“Yes,” said the General, “and now give me some information about the battalion.”

“I declare to God, never. I will not speak a word.”

“Pay attention; if I call the *chaous*, he will not spare you.”

“Strike; I will not speak a word.”

“No,” said the General, turning to his officers, “this man is too fanatical; he must be dealt with in another manner. I will now show you that by bribery you may do anything with the Arabs. Bentzman, bring me a bag of a thousand francs, and pour the half of them on the table.”

The sound of the coin tumbling out of the bag made the Arab open his eyes, and their pupils dilated as the heap increased.

“Look at them,” said the General, “they belong to you, if you lead me to the battalions.”

“Are your people ready? Let us be off at once,” said the Arab, rising abruptly.

“That is not all,” said the General; and he made a sign to the orderly to pour out the rest of the money. “I must have your tribe too.”

“I am ready; I will lead you,” said the Arab, who could not keep his eyes off the money. “Let us be off.”

“If you are ready, I am not yet,” replied the General; “I do not want your tribe yet; but to-morrow, if you lead me to the battalions, the half of that money is yours.”

The next day the column surprised the battalions, and this man was subsequently the General’s guide in a great many razzias. But the success of these enterprises had now become easy by the experience of our soldiers. The French had become as skilled in stratagems and snares as the Arabs themselves. Sometimes when the column crossed a country apparently quite dispeopled, and the object was to draw out Arabs from their hiding places, Douairs and Spahis cavaliers, taking off their red burnous, their only uniform at that time, would pretend to attack our rear-guard, when suddenly, at the first report of musketry, from the thickets and ravines, from every creek and corner of the ground, the whole population of the country would spring up to take part in the

*fête*, and to receive, as our soldiers expressed it, a *hearty good drubbing*. "With bread and cartouches you may go to the end of the world," said a General of the revolution to soldiers in a ragged plight, whom he was reviewing. "And shoes, then, he says nothing about shoes," grumbled one of these soldiers. The troops of General Lamoriciere might have made the same complaint; for both shoes and breeches were not only worn out, but well-nigh totally gone, leaving not a wreck behind. Industry, however, failed not, and supplied every want. Hides of oxen, just skinned, were distributed to the soldiers, who, with cords of rushes, called *alpha*, made themselves therewith excellent sandals, and also breeches. Thus they had plenty of occupation for their leisure hours; and thanks to the activity and sudden enterprises of the General, four months were soon over; and when General Arbouville arrived from Mostaganem with a convoy and fresh troops, the mortal blow had been struck at the power of the Emir. Its dissolution was already on all sides fast taking place.

It was indeed at the foot of the Mascara, in the plain of the Hachems, that this power, which we had fortified by a series of faults, first originated.

At the back of the Mascara behind the opposite hill, may be seen the shadows of Cachrou, the *zaouia* of Si-Mahiddin, the father of Abd-el-Kader, and on the right, close to the city, Ersibia, where the heads of the three tribes of the Beni-Hamer, and the Garabas, met to nominate the chief who should undertake the task of recovering the country from the disorder into which the Turkish power had plunged it; for, said these sages, "the Arab always needs to govern him one who knows how to make use, with equal address, of the bit and the spur." All the influential men, Marabouts and warriors, thronged to this meeting on horseback. Si-Larach, a Marabout of the Hachems, nearly a hundred years old, and held in great reverence by all, presided over it.

At this period, Mahiddin, the father of Abd-el-Kader, was held in high consideration throughout the country. His reputation for learning, his persecution of the Turks, and two pilgrimages to Mecca, made him looked upon as a saint. On his second visit to the tomb of the prophet, he took his son, Abd-el-Kader, with him, and the pilgrims having finished their devotions at Mecca, proceeded to Bagdad, where the *Kobba* (tomb) of Si-Abd-el-Kader-el-Djelalli, (the Sultan of perfect

men), greatly venerated in all the countries of the West of Africa, is to be seen. They had, for the purpose of prayer, entered the seven chapels with the gilded dome, which surround the tomb of the saint, when the saint himself stood before them in the form of a negro, carrying a basket of dates, milk, and honey. "Where is the Sultan of the West?" said the negro to Mahiddin. "There is no Sultan with us," replied Mahiddin, "we are poor people fearing God, and coming from Mecca," and having eaten some of the dates brought by the negro, they were retiring, when the negro cried after them, "The Sultan is with you, and mark my words, the reign of the Turk is over."

This legend, which had become prevalent throughout the country, gave, on the fall of the Turkish power, new consideration to the family of Mahiddin; and in the Arab assembly at Ersibia, allusion being made to it, Si-Larrach, the centennial Marabout, declared that during the night Muley-Abd-el-Kader-el-Djelalli had himself appeared to him and conversed with him; that whilst the saint remained, he saw a throne before him, and on asking for whom it was intended, "for El Hadj-Abd-el-Kader-Ould-Mahiddin" was

the reply. This argument was decisive, and Si-Larrach, with three hundred horsemen, was immediately sent to the tent of Mahiddin to fetch the new Sultan. Mahiddin had had precisely the same dream as Si-Larrach, and when he asked Muley-Abd-el-Kader who was to sit on the throne he had answered, "either you or your son, Abd-el-Kader. If you accept it, your son will die; in the other case, you yourself will not have long to live." After having conferred with Si-Larrach, Mahiddin called his son, and put this question to him: "If you were to become Sultan how would you rule?" "If I were Sultan," replied Abd-el-Kader, "I would rule the Arabs with a rod of iron, and if the law commanded me to cut off the head of my own brother, I would do it with both my hands." Mahiddin then went in front of his tent with his son, and cried out, "Behold the son of Zora, the Sultan announced by the prophets!" And the new Sultan, followed by a multitude of cavaliers, made his entrance into Mascara, his whole fortune consisting, at the time, of one franc tied up in a corner of his haik. The next day a contribution of twenty thousand boudjous, levied on the Jews and Mozabites, constituted his first resources; and from this time

he placed all his important acts under the protection of Muley-Abd-el-Kader, affirming that the saint himself was their author, as he had counselled them in the night.

The tribes of the province, with the exception of three, who had nominated the son of Mahiddin, refused at first to acknowledge the authority of the new Sultan. His cleverness, however, his reputation for justice, and the bold enterprises he attempted, soon brought many over to him. We were ourselves, too, it must be confessed, chiefly instrumental in building up his power. The treaty of Desmichels, in 1843, was our first fault. By this treaty we honoured him with the title of the ancient Khaliffs, and furnished him the material means he had hitherto wanted to consolidate his authority. Workmen, powder, arms—he got all from us, and when, in his warfare with the tribes, he was twice beaten and nearly ruined by Mustapha-ben-Ismael and his Douairs, we refused the offers of Mustapha, and sent him again ammunition and muskets. The treaty of Tafna completed this series of mistakes, and inspired Abd-el-Kader with the hope of provoking a real spirit of nationality among the Arabs. When the new Sultan resumed hostilities in 1839, he showed

that he had not travelled in vain in Egypt, for he had learnt the value of organization, and had a regular army, devoted adherents, arms and munitions of war, and depots on the frontier of the Sersous. And as we were at that time heavy and slow in our movements, he concluded that he should be always able to baffle us. But the hopes of the Emir deceived him, for in a little time our columns were as ubiquitous as the enemy, and commenced operations which led to his ruin. Our first blows were struck in the province of Algiers, and after the campaign of 1840 General Lamoriciere had a long conference with the Duke of Orleans, in which he explained the plan of the future campaigns. The western province was, in the opinion of the General, the base of the power of the Emir. As his authority had its source in the *Grheurb*,\* it was in the *Grheurb*, he thought, he should be principally assailed; whilst the offensive should be vigorously carried on in the direction of Algiers. A month afterwards, M. de Lamoriciere was appointed commandant of the province of Oran, and immediately commenced those razzias and adventurous *coups de main*, which

\* *Grheurb*, in Arabic, signifies the West.

resulted in successes so triumphant. "The Beni-Hamer and the Garabas are my clothing, and the Hachems are my shirt," said the Emir, when speaking of the three tribes who had proclaimed him Sultan. And it was to strip him at once of his clothes and of his shirt that the winter campaign of Mascara was undertaken. If this system had been adopted a hundred and forty years before, by the Turkish Beys, it would have led to the same result. Any one who had seen Mascara when, in 1841, our column first occupied it, would not have recognised the city had he accompanied us in 1846. Twice ruined, Mascara is at present inhabited but by a very few Arabs; on the other hand, its European population is numerous, and houses, barracks, and military establishments, rising in all quarters, give it quite the appearance of a French town. This ancient capital of the Emir, commanding the fertile plain of the Eghris, is built on two hills, which are separated by a streamlet that turns a mill, and is surrounded by gardens, where the olive, the vine, and every variety of fruit tree, set it, in the spring or summer, in an embroidery of blossoms and verdure. The land of the Hachems, four leagues broad and twenty in length, lies stretched out at its foot;

and here and there large clumps and fields of fig trees break the monotony of the plain, whilst the view ranges over long silhouettes of hills on the horizon, and to the west over mountains perceived far away in the distance, their summits lost to the sight, or shaped only as dim, floating vapours.

The Arab traveller, Mohamed-ben-Yousef, says : “If you meet a man, fat, proud, and dirty, you may be sure he is an inhabitant of Mascara.” “Let us see if this saying be true,” said Caddour Myloud, a Douair officer, pointing with his finger to the first Arab we met at the gate of Mascara, and laughing with that inward chuckle which is the genuine Arab laugh—a laugh in ambush. Mohamed-Ben-Yousef was right, however, for among the motley mob that pressed forward to salute the General, the native of Mascara was easily recognised, and God knows there were, nevertheless, other Arabs enough in rags, and Kabyles, with tattered haiks. As for the Europeans, each of them wore the costume of his country. There were some from all parts, from the North and from the South, from Spain, and from Italy. Whilst our horses were making their way through a crowd, our companion, M. de Laussat, heard his name called out in the pure

*patois* of the Pyrenees. Surprised at this recognition, he turned his head, and saw approaching him a Bearnais, delighted at having met with *le monsieur*. Putting spurs to the *Apocalypse*, M. de Laussat soon reached his countryman, a native of the village near which he had been born. Their greeting was not without emotion on both sides. The Bearnais had had a grant of some ground in the gardens of Mascara, and was doing well. M. de Laussat promised to partake of a lunch at his house, and to taste the wine of his own vintage ; and the two friends parted in high contentment with each other.

The house where we halted was near a large mulberry tree, which was held in high respect, in the centre of the city. As soon as he had dismounted, the General, without loss of time, held a plenary court for the transaction of business, whilst the band of the regiment played outside for the entertainment of the public. On this day (Thursday) the twelve women of Mascara decked themselves in the best toilets, and under the pretext of listening to the music, coquettled with all the idlers of the garrison, smoking their cigars, and supping their *petits verres d'absinthe* at the illustrious pastrycook's. This colonist, who had

come with the column that had first occupied the town, commenced his business under a tent ; he then had a stall, and his prosperity growing with the prosperity of the town, he had now a shop.

“ False dice are less false than the men of Hachems,” says the Arab proverb. In verification of this proverb, a certain chief of the Hachems had been guilty of delinquencies that had greatly irritated the General, and his first object was to investigate the particulars of these offences. As soon as the delinquents were brought before him, by the chief of the Arab bureau, the General accosted him in a strain of warm and passionate language, which often, when in ordinary discourse, made the utterance of his mind like a charge of cavalry. He listened, nevertheless, to their reply, set a just value on their lying protestations, and terminated the *Lit de Justice* by sending one of the Caids forthwith to prison. He then turned to other subjects of local importance, on which he conferred with General Renaud and the commandant Bastoul. This commandant being more known than any of our officers at Mascara, was called *Father Bastoul*. He was a bulky man, with square shoulders and a prominent belly. Out of his big head, and

under his broad forehead, shone brilliant eyes, full of perspicuity and energy ; and his good nature, with a spice of knowingness and fun in it, and his reputation for justice and good sense, had gained him the name of father. Being commandant of the place, and in many cases judge without appeal, he always found the means of sending plaintiffs and defendants both away as well contented, as, according to their respective positions, could be expected ; and his reputation was so widely spread that the Arabs frequently appealed to him instead of their own Cadi.

## IV.

We passed two days at Mascara, and then, business over, and the wine of the Béarnais being well tested, as to its quality, by M. de Laussat, we set out for Mostaganem. Instead of the short cut by the ravine of Beni-Chougran, we took the regular road. In order to visit El-Bordj (the fort), where a detachment of our soldiers was posted, we marched first in an eastward direction. We were to bivouac and breakfast at this post, which is situated at the foot of the mountain, near a fountain of water that flows into the plain of the Habra. Caddour-ben-Murphi, the agha of the cavalry, who had come to pay his respects to the General, and had invited us to a *diffa*, accompanied us. This chief, Caddour, was a stalwart soldier, six foot high, of a bold and determined bearing, and, as the Arabs say, *master of the arm.* One saw at once that he had been nursed in the

midst of arms ; that the smell of powder was to him the most fragrant of odours ; that war was his passion ; and that in its grand emotions was his whole strength. At his side, nearly hidden in his deep Arab saddle, rode his little son Murphi—a charming boy, eleven years of age. The sunny face and lively movements of this little fellow greatly entertained us. His small voice became quite sonorous in giving the word of command. To keep him within bounds, a negro attendant never lost sight of him. This slave carried a short-barrelled gun, which the child amused himself by firing off continually. When we had reached the gardens, the officers of Mascara bade us adieu, and we continued our route, following the shores—if they may so be called—of precipitous steeps, which led us, by gentle slopes, into the plain ; whilst overhead were peaks nearly out of sight, and ravines inextricable, where the Kabyle-tribe, savages of Beni-Chougran, were wont to find secure refuges.

Whilst these savages were masters of the direct passages from Mascara to Oran and Mostaganem, they were very formidable enemies ; yet, *heads of stone* as they are called, they were at last forced to come under the yoke. Though wild and in-

tractable, the Beni-Chougran have the reputation of being faithful to their word ; and in 1831 the Turks of Mascara, when the tribes of the plain were in revolt, were indebted to them for their lives ; for they allowed them to escape, with all their treasures, through the mountain passes, of which they were the sole masters. Chedly, their former agha, was now with us. There was a prevalent report that General Lamoriciere was about to reinstate him in his authority ; and the long conversation he held apart with Caddour-Myloud, *the fox*, led me to believe that for once there was some truth in a public rumour. Chedly was one of the most intelligent Arabs we had met, and was quite sensible of the resources civilization afforded us to subdue his countrymen. He had introduced several agricultural improvements into this part of the country. Nearly all the olive trees of the mountain were grafted by him ; and, for more than two years, the potato had appeared on his table with the national couscous. Chedly had, besides, travelled in France ; and nothing could be more curious than to hear him speak on this subject ; of the *rivers of the sea*, on which fire-boats sailed ; and of our railroads. "You have seen," he would say to his countrymen, "the ball flying before the

pursuing powder: well, it is just so with their fire-carriages"—and he imitated to perfection the hissing and shrieking noises of the engine. His bright eye, and his finely-chiselled, cunning features, showed that he could observe, and profit by his observations. Gas, and the manner in which it is ignited, was what, he said, most struck him; but it was evident that nothing had escaped his notice, though suspicion, which is the instinct of a savage, kept him silent.

The earth is the book of cavaliers, say the soldiers of the *Marghab*; the traces of those who are no more may be seen there. And so we found it, for our souvenirs were strewn over the country; and whilst the Arab horsemen indulged themselves in the joyous exercises of the *fantasia*, I listened to the Commandant Illiers relating to M. de Laussat one of those thousand accidents of war which the hills and the landscape around us brought up so vividly to our recollection.

At the time when M. Bosquet, then attached to the staff of General Lamoriciere, was in command of a little moveable column in the environs of Mascara, one of his scouts informed him that the red cavaliers of Abd-el-Kader were directing their march towards a fraction of the Hachems

who had come over to us, in order to carry them off to the south. M. Bosquet thereupon, giving the necessary directions, immediately betook himself to Oued-Traria, opposite Mascara, where the tents of the Hachems were pitched. The Arab cavaliers had orders not to engage in any combat, but only to force the Hachems to accompany them. From the top of the hill, then, these red regulars of the Emir might be seen going from tent to tent, hastening the departure of their inmates. The scene was one of indescribable confusion. Women, children, flocks, mingled together their cries and bleatings; but in proportion as our cavaliers advanced, those of the Emir retired. The population was like a net drawn at the two opposite sides. The last mesh, however, remained in our hands, and their tents being taken up, the Hachems bivouacked under the protection of French bayonets. On that night M. Bosquet slept in his arms. By his order Lieut. Gibon, an officer of tried courage and resolution, planted himself and a company of native troops in ambush, at a place which had been chosen the evening before. Nevertheless, all was calm: nothing disturbed the silence of the night, and towards morning Mahomed Ben Sabeur was commanded to set out with his

tents for Mascara under an escort. "If you have no wish," he added, "to go to Abd-el-Kader, the escort will protect you, in case you are attacked; if, on the contrary, you do wish to go, I wish to keep you from going."

"Fear nothing," replied Mohamed, "my heart is upright. In coming over to you, I did so with entire single-mindedness. What I say to you, I have said to the Emir himself."

"Where, then, did you see him?"

"This night, in the laurel thicket on the banks of the river. He called for me, and I heard his voice, and went. 'And you also,' said he, 'Ben Sabeur, do you desert me, do you abandon me in the struggle?' 'I leave you,' I replied, 'because the hour of resistance is over; believe me you must succumb; your arm against the French is impotent. I have sacrificed everything for you, my brothers are dead, I have lost my property, and poverty only is my portion; I have not even a horse left to go to battle on. The hour is come when the cries of women and sobbing of little children should be attended to.' The Emir looked down upon the earth for a while, and remained silent, a tear rolled over his cheek; then raising his head, 'Here,' said he, 'take this horse, it will

bring you good luck.' He then put his horse's bridle into my hands, and returned to his own people."

"The ambush was not a hundred paces off: why did you not inform it that Abd-el-Kader was so near?"

"If a friend, who had for a long time lavished kindness on you, had come to you under the same circumstances, would you have betrayed him? Answer me from your heart."

"No," said M. Bosquet, "you are a brave fellow." And Mohamed Ben Sabeur started for Mascara without an escort, where he duly arrived, and rendered us afterwards many faithful services.

These poor Hachems had, indeed, had harassments enough to make them desire a little repose. Their history is a curious one, for it shows one particular aspect of African war to perfection: *the undressing and dressing* of a tribe, if I may so express myself. To ruin a tribe, that is, to conquer it (almost synonymous words), there is but one mode, the *razzia*—the *coup de main* of a troop falling upon a population with the rapidity of a bird of prey, and carrying off flocks, stores, treasures—all. A few *coups* of a less exterminating character generally suffice to bring a tribe

to terms ; but as among men some are constantly pursued by ill fortune, so there are tribes who are always in a state of broil, either with one neighbour or another. This was the case with that fraction of the Hachems which Colonel Géry met at Ouled-Aouf. The forays of General Lamoriciere had ruined this great tribe, but the fraction just mentioned had suffered more than any other division of it. When the band came to the Smala, they had just been plundered by the Assennas. At Smala they had, by their industry, somewhat recovered from this blow, when they were *razziaed* by the Duc d'Aumale, and pursued by General Lamoriciere. A good number of the fugitives escaped, but it was only to fall among the Harars, who stripped them quite naked, so that when they were captured by the column of Colonel Géry, they were massed without discrimination among the other prisoners. Happily for them, General Lamoriciere had just laid his hand upon other tribes of the Hachems ; and now that the war was carried on far away from Mascara, he resolved to send the Hachems back to their old territory, the plain of Eghris, which was completely dispeopled. For nothing, indeed, is more dangerous than a desert country, as cut-purses and cut-throats are

sure to frequent it, and it must needs be quite out of the reach of the police. It was important, however, that the environs of Mascara should be safe, and it was for this reason that General Lamoriciere marched off into this region the most numerous fractions of the Hachems, which, after the *coup de main* at Smala, he had surprised in the Haut-Riou. How was the tribe changed? Formerly so proud, so boastful, so superbly mounted, on five hundred horses, it had now hardly fifty broken-down hacks, and no tents or flocks, but women and children in abundance. The wretched band had even no arms, so for their security a redoubt was constructed on the plain, which being gunned and manned, two hundred and fifty *Zéphirs* were appointed to be their guard. As this was the harvest season, they would not want food, but want every thing else they did, and with every thing else they were supplied. Friendly tribes gave them tents, and then they began to sell wood, straw, lime, and Mascara mats, by which means they picked up a little money. In the razzias we made, we had always the habit of putting aside a certain number of oxen, sheep, and horses, which were afterwards given to the

principal families of the conquered tribe ; for, thanks to the feudal system, by succouring these, the whole tribe was succoured too. The men of great tents enjoy, it is true, many privileges, but they have also heavy obligations imposed on them ; among which, that of protecting those beneath them is the one most scrupulously observed. Besides vending, robbery constituted one of the great resources of the Hachems ; and this the neighbouring tribes soon learnt, to their cost. At seed time, the *beylic* (the state) lent them seed, and their neighbours oxen ; so, the harvests being good, this badgered and battered band were, in two years' time, doing very well. As political enemies they had now no danger in them, and they secured, by their responsibility to the French authorities, the safety of the roads.

Whilst conversing on these subjects, we arrived at the little plateau of El-Bordj, where we were to receive the hospitality of Caddour-ben-Murphi. Grand halting tents, made of white woollen cloth, were pitched before the gate of the inclosure, which gave to the place the name of the fort (El-Bordj). A detachment of soldiers from the garrison of Mascara were at the moment engaged in repairing its wall, and in building, at the

expense of the Arabs, stone houses for the Agha and his cavaliers. The General was highly pleased at these works, which he justly regarded as very important, for the Arab will only be completely ours when he abandons his tent and fixes his abode in an immovable house. He encouraged the soldiers with his praises, and they deserved them, for they were as ready in peace to give their sweat, as they had been in war to shed their blood, for the aggrandisement of France. It was nearly twelve o'clock when the General had finished his survey of the place, and as we had been on horseback since five o'clock, our stomachs began to cry "cupboard." It was then, with no inconsiderable pleasure, that we found our legs crossed under the tables of the great tents, on which presently appeared large plates of couscouss, pigmented ragouts, and roast sheep. The couscouss is a corn cake, the flower of which is rolled on a bolter like powder. This cake, cooked by the vapours of meat, is basted the moment before it is served up, either with milk or with the bouillon of the mutton, for the Arabs never eat beef, unless forced by hunger to do so. Enormous dishes, hollowed out of a single block of the walnut tree, receive the cake and the pyramid of

boiled meat and vegetables that surmount it. Little wooden spoons are then distributed to the guests, and all plunge at once into the smoking mountain down to its centre, where the pasty is warmest and most saturated with the bouillon. Caddour and his little son stood in waiting at the door of the tent, according to the Arab custom, which obliges a host to superintend the serving up of a feast. As soon as Caddour saw that his guests ate no more of the couscouss, he made a sign to his negroes, who carried off the dishes to his chevaliers, grouped about the green sward in front, who forthwith attacked the relics most heartily, the palms of their hands serving them for plates. Meantime, other servants brought in porringers without number, filled with ragouts of a thousand sorts: eggs prepared with red pepper, fowls in onion sauce, pimentos powdered over with saffron, and so many other good things, that the French palate must have become somewhat Arabized to relish them. The *roumi saphi*,\* those lately came from Europe, so greedily attacked the first dishes that they had no appetite for those

\* *Roumi*, from *Romani*, foreigners; *saphi* in Arabic signifies, pure, limpid; and *roumi saphi* a stupid foreigner, a ninny.

which were to follow. But I would advise you, if you ever go to Africa, to imitate our example; for we imposed a wise restraint on our hunger in order to do honour to the *standards* which we saw in the distance. A dozen Arabs, indeed, soon came forward, carrying on long poles sheep roasted entire. Pulled on one side and pushed on the other the sheep slipped from the poles, and fell, so being dished up, on a large cloth of blue cotton. An Arab, skilled in carving, then made large cuts in the animal with his knife, to facilitate the entrance of our hands into the interior; when every one tore out such bits as struck his fancy. To these roasts, worthy of the heroes of Homer, succeeded dishes of milk, sugar, and raisins, &c., pasties by thousands; and when these, which closed the feast, were removed, large ewers were brought to every guest, who having washed his hands in these silver basins, smoked his pipe or his segar, sipping the while *boiled* coffee, handed to him in little cups without handles, in silver stands, to protect his fingers from the heat. And the General then gave the signal for departure.

A west wind had covered the sky with clouds, and these clouds, according to their sulky wont, poured down torrents of rain in big drops, which

soon made our horses slip about on the slippery descents of the mountain. Happily, the wind and rain ceased before we arrived at the fountain, where we were to pass the night. The next day the sun, shining in all its splendour, brightened up the country all round ; and we traversed fields clothed in their first spring verdure, saluted by those shrill cries with which the Arab women of the *Douar* are accustomed to do honour to the governor of the province. When half way, the *goums* of the Mina, under the command of Si-el-Aribi, rejoined the General, and took their place on his right, marching, with floating banner, on the side opposite the *goum* of Caddour. The cavaliers advanced in a straight line, despite the inequalities of the ground, abreast of their chief, and presented a spectacle such as France in the olden time often furnished when a great baron was on his march, followed by his armed household. Si-el-Aribi and Caddour-ben-Murphi well represented, indeed, the two great elements of feudal and of Arab society—religious nobility and military nobility.

His noble manners, the majestic dignity of his bearing, the simplicity with which he received the homage of the Arabs, his princely generosity,

and his firmness in command, all pointed out the Khalifat of the Mina as a man of an ancient religious race, conscious that his ancestors had been among the powerful of the earth, and that he was the heir to all the respect which was their due. Thus he commanded all consciences and all arms. He was eminently a man of council, deciding all, directing all, but disdaining to take a personal part in any struggle. Caddour, on the contrary, was knight banneret, cut-and-thrust point and blade—the sword was for ever in his hand. He delighted in danger, to have obstacles to overcome and break in pieces. By his courage he had risen, and by his courage he preserved his power. In war he had found the sources of all his riches, and of the grandeur of his family. “Whence did you get these negroes?” he was asked one day. “These I bought,” he replied, “but these two I took by my sword.” Mounted on horses caparisoned in gold, and with haiks as white as snow, they looked, both of them, superb. As we thus advanced, whilst traversing a sandy tract, broken here and there by enclosures of fig trees, a cloud of dust rose up before us, and presently appeared a troop of cavaliers at full gallop. We broke thereupon into a trot, and, as we gained

the top of an ascent, we found that these horsemen were the marghzen of Mostaganem, who, pulling up suddenly, threw themselves from their horses to embrace the stirrup of the General, whilst Colonel Bosquet, the chief of the Arab bureau, who was at their head, shook him by the hand. We all dismounted and exchanged salutations. Colonel Bosquet was one of those men who are rarely to be met with. His iron will, his good sense, his safe judgment, and his general intelligence had given him success in every enterprise with which he had been entrusted. He was esteemed by all; and the kindness of his manners and of his heart gained him, besides, the affection of all who approached him. His qualities, in the opinion of every one who knew him, fitted him for a high command. He is just one of those who in desperate circumstances would find resources, and come out of them triumphantly. He is still young, has risen to the rank of General, and is at present commandant at Sétif. God knows what his future fortunes may be; but there is no doubt that when an opportunity of distinguishing himself may occur, he will neither be wanting to it, nor to himself.

The scene around us was really singular.

Animated by our ride, every face was lit up with joyousness. On all sides clattered arms and spurs ; their sound was like a prelude to battle, whilst instead of rushing into combat, we were only peacefully to meet, after an hour's march, General Pelissier, commandant of the subdivision of Mostaganem, who was waiting for us with the 4th Mounted Chasseurs, at the three Marabouts. This regiment was worthy of that cavalry whose name alone struck terror into the ranks of the enemy. “*Sassours ! Sassours !*” cried the Arabs when they saw in the distance these bronzed-faced troopers on their stout little horses ; and the cavaliers even of the *black days* hesitated to confront them. These chasseurs owed this *prestige* to the blood they had shed, to their impetuous courage, and to their firmness in positions the most perilous and difficult. The features of these soldiers and officers, who saluted us with their sabres in passing, may be seen faithfully pourtrayed in the museum at Versailles, by Horace Vernet, for they formed the squadrons of Smala, and of Oued-Fodha of heroic memory, where General Changarnier, his cannon balls being exhausted, precipitated them on the enemy, saying, “This is my artillery.” They dis-

tinguished themselves also at Oued-Mala, the tomb of the regular battalions of Isly; and in twenty combats besides, where they were always worthy of themselves. Colonel Dupuch now commanded this troop, whose bugles and trumpets animated our march across the valley of gardens which leads to Mostaganem.

This valley, covered with fruit and fig trees, is sheltered from the winds of the sea by the hills which run along the shore. It is the habitual promenade of the inhabitants of the city. It terminates at half a league from the city walls, where a broad strip of land begins, which is illustrated by the oxen of Marshal Bugeaud, and the great hat of M. de Corcelles. To explain. At the time of the Mascara expedition, Marshal Bugeaud, being deficient in means of transport, determined to turn the oxen, whom the Arabs are in the habit of loading like mules, to account. For this purpose a great number were driven together, and were loaded with sacks of sugar and of rice. Whereupon a regimental rhymester composed a song, which is still repeated in the country, to the air of the *Gueux* of Béranger:

“ Les bœufs, les bœufs,  
Sont bien malheureux,  
Leur sort est affreux,  
Plaignez les bœufs.”

The oxen were no doubt of the same opinion, for on first hearing the drums and fifes they took to flight, and, starting off at full gallop, scattered on all sides the provisions entrusted to their gravity and wisdom.

As for M. de Corcelles, his celebrity is quite as great as that of the oxen of the Marshal. This M. de Corcelles was nothing else than a large grey hat, surmounted by the feather of some bird of prey, a black frock divided in the middle by a great white sabre-belt, in brief, a deputy *Fra Diavolo*, which produced a sensation which is spoken of even now ; that is, when one is disposed to lose time in idle tales, as we were now doing. Our gay talk was, however, interrupted ; the beat of the drum called us to the general, and we immediately afterwards entered Mostaganem.

There is an Arab story to this effect : two children during the Rhamadan were playing on the banks of a rivulet, which, after trickling on for a league, fell into the sea. In the midst of their play the youngest of them, plucking a reed, sucked

it, and then offered it to his companion, saying, “*Muce Kranem*,” (suck the sugar-cane). Hammid-el-Abid, a powerful chief of the tribe of the Mehal, was passing at the time over the hill, and heard the words of the children. Hammid was just then contemplating the foundation of the city on the spot, but knew not what name to give it. The children relieved him from his embarrassment, and *Muce Kranem*, says the legend, was the name of the city built by Hammid, in 1300. But this warrior chief has left more mementos than this legend behind him. The fort of the Mehal still exists, and the great works carried out by his three daughters have made their memory dear to all the inhabitants; for they owe their aqueducts to the beautiful Seffouana, their gardens to the gracious Melloula, and a mosque, in which she was afterwards buried, to the pious Mansoura. And it is doubtless to the prayers of these three damsels that Mostaganem (*Muce-Kranem*) owes the prosperity which it has always enjoyed even under the rule of the accursed Christian.

A ravine, whence runs a rivulet, separates the city from a little hill called *Matemore*, which derives its name from the numerous *Silos*, surrounded by a battlemented wall, which the Turks

had dug there. The principal military establishments stand upon the crown of this hill, whence a magnificent view may be seen. Underneath, the city, the houses, the gardens ; in front, the sea constantly agitated by the west wind ; on the right, at a league's distance, lofty mountains ; whilst in the east, the eye follows the silhouettes of wooded hills, along the sea up to the vast bay of La Macta, where, rising to the pinnacle of the Cape of Iron, their great naked ridges and grey rocks stretch into the sky ; and, finally, the mountains of Lions, in the far away distance, close the scene. Though the horizon is immense, the eye may distinguish with ease every detail ; but when the air is humid, provided there be no wind, which is often the case just before a storm, then, by a singular optical illusion, the distances seem to be lessened, and it appears as if a few strokes of the oar would suffice to transport one to the port of Arzew, whose white houses on the opposite bank, at a league from the Cape, are plainly visible.

Four thousand natives, colonists from all countries, and a numerous garrison lived in harmony together in the city of Mostaganem, passing their days without care and without anxiety. "It is written," saith the Musselman. "What matters

it," said the Christian. The result was the same ; no one cared for the morrow ; and the Governor watched over and cared for all. And indeed he did so ; nothing passed without his special notice and superintendence, and you may believe me, he had but little repose during the few days he remained at Mostaganem. As for ourselves, as soon as we were at liberty, we passed our time with the officers of the chasseurs, our brave comrades, whom we met at a "circle" they had established at one of the cavalry barracks. Every one found here amusement and repose to his taste. Journals and reviews covered the table, and on sofas stuffed with hay we might stretch ourselves at our ease. But to the player, chess and back-gammon were the only resources, for cards were forbidden. The only ornaments of this room were its painted wainscot, where something like a picture was intended, a clock on the chimney-piece, and furniture hidden under striped canvass ; but a banner stained with blood, taken from the enemy by Geffine, and two drums of the regular battalion of Embarek, exterminated at Oued-Mala, were suspended from its walls. We enjoyed ourselves much in this atmosphere of frankness and cordiality. We were all clothed in the same glorious

livery, had all encountered danger, had all faced death, and the arms which clanked at our every step, were not a vain parade, but had often been the protection of our lives. When in such a company hand presses hand, there is a conviction that it would come to your succour in case of need. Companions in hardships and perils, we were constantly brought together by danger. Such was the spirit of the regiment.

But alas! like the "Wandering Jew," we could not rest anywhere, even where our halting places were most agreeable. The steam-boat, passing by Mostaganem, brought despatches for General Lamoriciere, announcing the speedy arrival of Marshal Bugeaud. Orders were therefore given for our departure, and three days afterwards we dismounted in the Court of Chateau Neuf.

## THE PROVINCE OF ORAN.

## SECOND PART.

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THE PRISONERS OF SIDI-BRAHIM—THE  
FRONTIER OF MOROCCO.

## I.

“ Lieutenant, there is a Maltese wants to speak to you.”

“ The devil take him ! Who’s there ?”

And rubbing my eyes with that movement of angry impatience which every one feels on being awoke out of his first sleep, I soon recovered my composure.

“ Lieutenant,” resumed the phantom of the foreign legion, as soon as he saw I was in a state to understand him, “ there is a Maltese who says he wants to speak with the General.”

“ It is I, Durande ! I come from Djema-Rhazaouat,” called out the man whom the honest German had taken for a Maltese, from behind the half-open door.

Immediately I jumped out of my bed ; I put on my uniform in haste. “ Enter,” said I to M. Durande, “ enter quickly, and pardon the stupidity of this soldier. What news do you bring ? ”

“ Good, Sir, heaven be thanked ! the prisoners are saved ; I have left them at Djema.”

“ Let us hasten to the General ; he will be delighted.”

And springing to the door, I descended the winding stairs, four steps at a time, at the risk of breaking my neck, followed by M. Durande, wrapped in a great Neapolitan cloak, dressed in the costume of a fisherman, and so very like a freebooter of the coasts, that the error of the soldier was really excusable. M. Durande waited in the great Moorish saloon, whilst I went in to the General. It was necessary to shake him rudely, for it was just as difficult to rouse him from sleep as it was to tear him from his studies. As soon as I had told him the news,

“ Send,” said he, “ for Colonel Martinprey ;

wake those gentlemen up, and let two Arab couriers be in readiness to mount."

It was half-past one o'clock in the morning. Two minutes afterwards the orderlies were on their road, and I rejoined the General. We found poor Durande sitting on one of the sofas of the great saloon. His teeth were chattering with the fever that was beginning to attack him ; and no wonder. He had been constantly at sea for sixty hours, tumbling about in an open boat, alternately agitated by hope and fear. Excitement had kept him up as long as his strength was necessary to accomplish his duty ; but now the reaction had set in. He could hardly open his mouth ; but what had not been the fatigues he had gone through for a whole month !

On the 2nd Nov., 1846, an Arab brought to the governor of Melilla—a city occupied by the Spaniards, on the coast of Africa—a letter from the Commandant Courby de Cognord, a prisoner of the Emir. In this letter M. de Cognord informed the governor that the chief under whose guard he and ten of his companions in captivity, who had alone survived the massacre of the prisoners by Abd-el-Kader in the month of September, 1845, had consented to liberate them on

receiving a ransom of 40,000 francs. The governor of Melilla immediately transmitted this letter to General Arbouville, at that time commandant *par interim* of the province of Oran. Although he had little hope of success, the General, not willing that the slightest chance should escape him, begged the commandant of the Veloce corvette to choose out for him an intelligent and energetic officer fit to be sent on an important mission. M. Durande was the officer picked out. With respect to the 40,000 francs for the ransom, the General had them not; but, happily, the money-chest of the paymaster-general of the division was at Oran; and this chest was broken open with the best grace in the world. Honest gendarmes, become robbers for the occasion, came to the help of Colonel Martinprey, a *proces-verbal* was made out, and 40,000 francs, in good Spanish douros, were carried on board the Veloce, which transported M. Durande forthwith to Mellilla. The Veloce then gathered what news it could from every Tanger courier touching at the port, when an order from Algiers sent the corvette to Cadiz, to be placed at the disposition of M. Alexandre Dumas. Oran remained without a single stationary vessel of war, and the

communications with Morocco were interrupted.

We had from this time received no news; therefore you may judge with what impatience we waited for the account of M. Durande; but fever stopped his mouth. By dint of hot drinks, however, he at last recovered his strength, and told us that, as soon as he had arrived at Melilla, an Arab had been sent by the Spanish governor with a letter to M. de Cognord, informing him that the ransom money was in the city; that he should hold himself in readiness; and that a vessel, freighted by M. Durande, would cruise constantly along the coasts. For a long time the vessel saw no one, and M. Durande began to lose all hope; when, on the 24th of November, two Arabs, coming forward into the *fosses* of the place, announced that the prisoners were four leagues off, at Bertinza, and that they would be delivered up the next day, on the 25th. A large fire, lit upon a height, was to indicate the spot where the exchange was to take place. The governor of the city and M. Durande now conferred together on the subject:

“This may be but a snare,” said the governor; “we have no hold whatever on the Arabs.”

"My mission is," replied M. Durande, "to save the prisoners, at any risk; and what matters it if I perish in obeying the orders of the General?"

It was agreed, then, that the next day, towards noon, M. Durande should be at the appointed place; and that Don Louis Coppa, the Major de Place of Melilla, should, as a convoy of M. Durande's boat, keep at some distance in another boat, well manned and armed. Don Louis Coppa was to have charge of the money, but not to approach till he should receive a sign to that effect from M. Durande.

At noon the fire was seen, and at noon the barque approached the shore. Four or five horsemen were soon on the beach. They came to say that the prisoners had been detained for half an hour, but that they would soon be there; and then started off at a gallop. M. Durande, fearing a surprise, re-embarked, and kept out of the range of shot. Presently there was a cloud of dust raised by the horses of the Emir; and from the barque the eleven Frenchmen might be distinguished, whilst the regulars of the Emir rode away, taking the prisoners with them to a height, where they waited. Fifty Arabs alone remained with their chief, near the barque, which was now

close to the beach. This was a solemn moment, for hardly the length of a musket separated our brave sailors from their greatly outnumbering enemies. Nothing could have been easier than an act of treason. On the Arab chief demanding the money, the boat, which was cruising at some distance, was pointed out to him, and he was told that if he would go on board he might count it. He accepted the offer, and the signal being given the Spanish canoe approached. When the money was counted, the half of it was taken ashore, and the half of the prisoners delivered up. On the other half being paid, the remainder of the prisoners were also liberated, and M. Durande put out to sea. The wind being favourable, they arrived promptly at Melilla, where the Spanish garrison gave the valiant soldiers, whose courage had never flagged a moment through so many months of severe trial, a most cordial reception.

All were, however, anxious to be on French ground as soon as possible, and as the wind blew from the strait, they embarked at once, and twelve hours afterwards, Colonel Mac Mahon, and the little garrison of Djema-Rhazaouat gave, at a few leagues from the Marabout of Sidi-Brahim, the witness of their heroic valour, quite a family *fête* to those whom

they had never expected to see more. As for M. Durande, he escaped from the felicitations of all; for, anxious to fulfill his mission completely, he had put out again to sea, in order to announce without loss of time, the good news to the General.

We obtained these details with much difficulty, but, by the help of tea and grog, we at last got them. Enough was now known to write immediately to the Marshal, who had arrived at Mostaganem by the valley of the Cheliff, and whilst one of us put the brave sailor to bed, to refresh himself with the repose he had so well earned, Colonel de Martimprey, seated by the General, wrote, at his dictation, the letter which the Arab couriers were waiting to receive. The year before it was a dispatch of Colonel Martimprey that had given the first news of the disaster; he also had given all the details of the combat of Sidi Brahim; and now again his hand was to send intelligence of the deliverance of those whose terrible story he had twice recorded. When, therefore, we approached the bureau, he put us aside saying, "For this once I take your place; permit me, I am superstitious."

The couriers dispatched, we all returned to our beds, rejoicing in the thought that we should

see shortly our companions in arms, for the order had been given for the *Veloce*, which was expected every hour, to sail, without dropping anchor, for Djema, when it was announced that she had been signalled standing out for *Algiers*. Our embarrassment was great, as we had no steam-boat, and the wind from the strait made it impossible for a sailing vessel to make the voyage. The *Caméléon*, the steam vessel of the Marshal, had been much damaged, and could not put to sea for forty-eight hours. What to do, then, was a puzzling question, when those honourable *Oran* merchants, *M. M. Dervieux*, hearing of the perplexity of the General, put at his disposal a little steamer of their own, the *Pauline*, and would not even take in return the price of the coals burned. Twelve hours afterwards the *Pauline* anchored at Djema, whilst the Marshal, having received his dispatches at *Mostaganem*, announced his arrival for the next day. During the night the *Pauline* returned, and at five o'clock in the morning orders had been expedited from head quarters. At seven o'clock the troops were on their way to receive the prisoners. The whole city was in a state of joyous excitement; every one was dressed in his best; natives of the south, natives of the

north, the Valencian with his pointed hat, the heavy fair-faced German, the Marseillais, so easily known by his accent—the whole motley throng, the women especially, always the first at sight-seeing, marched after the troops; and the battalions, extending from Chateau Neuf to the fort of Hamoun, wound like a long uncoiled iron serpent about the side of the hill over a space of near three quarters of a league.

There was not a cloud to be seen on the sky. An African December sun, more lustrous than the sun of the month of May in Paris, shone upon the people, the port, the city. The spacious bay, as unruffled as a mirror, seemed to participate in the joy on shore; for the murmurs of its waves, bathing the foot of the rocks, were as gentle as the murmurs of a rivulet. The banner floated from the top of Fort Hamoun. The Pauline had quitted Merz-el-Kebir: she would soon double the point, skirt round the rocks, and stop at a little distance from the quay. All eyes were on the look-out for this vessel. The long-boat of the Caméléon, with her sailors in their white shirts with blue collars, was ready, with uplifted oars, to salute soldiers who had shed their blood and supported captivity

for the honour of their country, with the salute to which only admirals are entitled.

As the boat rowed away from the ship, the crowd became quite silent; and the eagerness of every one to see those who had suffered so much, was indescribable. The prisoners were now close to the beach; and General Lamoriciere, advancing, extended his hand to Commandant Cognord, and embraced him with the heartiness of a soldier. Military music then striking up, responded so truly to the feelings of the people, that every face brightened with emotions, and tears were in every eye. As they continued their march, drums beat, soldiers presented arms, banners saluted, and thus they advanced, with an escort of officers, receiving applause from all, till they reached their quarters. Two hours afterwards, the city had resumed its ordinary quiet aspect; but regimental *fêtes* and family banquets were prolonged till far into the night.

At twelve o'clock the same day, General Lamoriciere, followed by five hundred cavaliers of the tribes of the Douairs and the Smelas, was on his way to meet Marshal Bugeaud. All this joyous troop marched in a straight line, their horses capering under them, and firing off, from time to time, a *feu de joie*, when the couriers an-

nounced the near approach of the Marshal. Immediately thereupon the cavalry halted, and, forming a semi-circle, remained motionless ; their fusées held aloft, to do honour to the governor of the country. General de Lamoriciere and the Marshal saluted each other very stiffly. They were at variance about different systems of colonization ; and it seems that among statesmen quarrels about opinions are as grave as the coquettish rivalries of women. The Marshal had come from Mostaganem in a little jaunting car (*char-a-banc*). He offered, with a very bad grace, a place at his side to General Lamoriciere ; and the two most powerful men in Africa drove on, in the midst of a cloud of men, horses, dust, and powder, with which the Arabs, according to their ancient custom, cleared the way.

On the next day the official receptions commenced. The old Marshal took his stand in the great Moorish hall of the Chateau Neuf, whose sculptured marble arches still show the crescent, the emblem of Turkish domination ; behind him were the officers of the staff, always ready to put their foot in the stirrup, and to gallop into danger ; on his right, the various corps of the army, the laborious, persevering, useful infantry, the cavalry, whose sabres, clattering against the

flagstones, sounded like the distant echo of a rattling charge ; on his left, the Douairs and the Smélas in their white burnous, several of whom were decked with the red ribbon at the breast, a decoration that services rendered, or wounds received in our cause, had entitled them to. Their attitude was full of dignity, and the draping folds of their costume, reaching to the ground, with their clear, brilliant eye, so peculiar to oriental races, reminded one of Biblical history ; whilst the old French chief, saluted with respect by all, as the first among them, looked like the strong link of union between the two people. It was thus surrounded that the Marshal received the eleven prisoners of Sidi-Brahim, taking a first step in advance, and bending his body, to embrace these confessors of the military honour of France. It moved us all deeply to hear the noble words which his soldier's heart prompted him to utter, in thanking, in the name of the army, these relics, which seemed to have survived to give testimony that our young African legions had preserved intact the traditions of honour and abnegation bequeathed to us by the battalions of our great wars. The levée then broke up, and the Marshal retiring with General de Lamoriciere,

these two chiefs conferred together about the poor French colonists, who had transported their misery from France to Africa, seeking from labour and a new country some mitigation of the privations and sufferings they had endured at home.

A part of the night was passed by the two generals in expediting business, for the Marshal had but a short time to stay, and put to sea the next day for Algiers. The Caméléon passed the regular packet in rounding the heights of Arzew, and the two ships spoke each other and exchanged news. Many Deputies were on board the packet. These gentlemen had come to study, before the opening of the session, Africa, the province of Oran especially, and the various systems of colonization that were on their trial. Having disembarked at ten o'clock at Merz-el-Kebir, they breakfasted at eleven at Chateau Neuf. The weather was dull; they had been sea-sick, and they all appeared very downcast. In our simplicity, we afforded them every facility for enquiring into the state of the province; on being told, however, that they could write to France that very evening by the commercial steam-packet, we found that matters of high importance obliged each and all of them to return to Paris without delay. On

that evening then, at five o'clock, after having been seven hours in the province of Oran, two of which had been passed in a carriage, and four at Chateau Neuf, the deputies departed in all haste, being enabled now to support their opinions with this phrase, which always carries so much weight with it: "I have seen, I have been in the country." It is thus that people judge of Africa.

## II.

AFTER the departure of the Marshal and the Generals there was nothing to detain the General at Oran. He gave orders, consequently, that we should hold ourselves in readiness for a march. We were now about to visit the west of the province, as we had already visited the circles of Mostaganem and Mascara.

Next day, at noon, we reached the remaining vestiges of Agkbeil. These ruins, which stretch to the south over the hills of Tessalah, belong to M. de Saint Maur, who came, followed by two greyhounds, his only subjects, to receive us at the entrance of his domains. It was thus, in former times, that tenants rendered homage to their liege lords. We all laughed, M. de Saint Maur particularly, at this resuscitation, evoked not altogether by the imagination of olden times. For in truth, this procession of the General across the province,

escorted by native chiefs and warlike populations, who in peace made play-things of their arms, resembled several that occurred in the sixteenth century, in this very country. The Spanish historian, Marmol, records particularly the brilliant sham fights, not unlike tournaments, that took place in 1520, on the occasion of a progress of Count Alcaudète, the governor of Oran, through the conquered provinces. "The Count," says Marmol, "took the road to Agkbeil, which is a ruined city; and on his approach, many Moors, among his allies, offered him their services. They came by family, or by race, as is their custom, each according to his rank. The first having arrived, the chiefs of the party embraced the Count and conversed with him, then putting their horses through a few showy capers, made place for others to come forward in their turn. Fifty families, or races, with their hundreds of horses, richly caparisoned, without taking into account foot-men, with their lances, spears, bucklers, and swords, were assembled on the occasion. They entertained the Count with a sham fight. The Moors in this combat had more than fifteen bands of five hundred camels each, preceded by twelve women and twelve camels, who, accom-

panied, by the handsomest of their families, approached the Count, saying: 'Welcome, a hearty welcome to the restorer of the state, the protector of orphans, the good and honourable knight, whose fame is so far spread!' And then other gallantries followed in Arabic, which were explained by the interpreters, and at every pause all men shouted and hurrahed." Now, after the lapse of three hundred years, a very similar scene occurred. What with horses richly caparisoned, and chiefs brilliantly clad, there was little wanting to make the resemblance complete.

The difference which existed between M. De Saint Maur and some of the neighbouring chiefs, respecting the distribution of a current of water, was to be settled this day. The dispute was set at rest in a most friendly manner. Terms of mutual accommodation were agreed upon under a fig tree, near the little stream which was the subject of discussion. The plaintiffs were seated on immense blocks of stone, relics of Roman works, testifying, at the distance of so many centuries, to the grandeur of the Roman power. Judgment being pronounced, the hospitality of the *diffa* followed. The sheep set before us, born on the plain, and roasted whole, was so succulent that it gave good

encouragement to M. Saint Maur in his colonizing prospects. He pledged himself that he also would have sheep with as long wool, and as delicate a flavour, as any in the country. And since then he has kept his promise, and another besides about the Arab couscous, which he solemnly engaged himself under the fig-tree to regale us with on our next visit. Fine buildings, and an active and laborious population, now give life and animation to this region, formerly so desolate, and yet so full of grandeur. The impression left on the mind by the surrounding landscape is altogether singular. On the top of the highest ruin, the eye ranging over the immense plain, sensations seize on the spectator which in Africa seem to arise out of the earth itself, and which French scenery can never inspire. Before him, at his feet, are great salt lakes, their diamond surfaces glittering in the sun ; on the right, undulating land-waves, blending with the mirage of the air, seem to float away and lose themselves in the haze ; on the left, green-wooded, semi-circular hills extend as far as Miserghin, when they rise in arid, rocky crests, gradually up to the summit of Santa Cruz, an agglomeration of stones, the site formerly of a Spanish fortress, and whence the eye

can command a view of the country all round. Further on, hardly distinguishable from the blue of the sky, a line of a deeper colour is first discernible, which is the sea, whose waves wash the shores of Provence ; and on the right, the wild, uncouth aspect of the mountains of Lions speaks feelingly of the distance that separates the beholder from France. In contemplating these solitudes, an inexpressible sentiment takes possession of the heart: it is a melancholy one, and yet it is full of grandeur ; far from prostrating, it elevates the mind. The shadows of by-gone centuries pass over one's head, and those plains, those mountains, where so many generations, so many varied people have contended and contend alternately with each other, seem to have preserved some mysterious virtue, under which the spectator succumbs. Hence, probably, the strong attachment all feel towards the country who have ever lived in it. From the chief to the soldier, all experience this ; and on their return to France, soon weary of the monotonous existence of home, they long again for the hazards, the adventures, and the stirring wild life which Africa alone can afford them, and without which they feel little more than half alive.

They would willingly, however, dispense with the rain and the fog, bad companions, I assure you, when the narrow gorges and slippery paths of the Tessalah are to be escaladed. Hardly had we entered among the mountains, when so heavy a fog came on, that we could not see two paces beyond our horses' heads. In France one in our place would probably have dismounted—we were too lazy for that; at the risk of being rolled down the ravines, we kept our seats, and with the capes of our cloaks over our heads, and cigars in our mouths, trusted for safety to the sure-footedness of our horses. "If my horse pitch me into a ravine, he will fall himself," said one of the chasseurs of the escort: "so reflect, comrade," added he, addressing his horse, for the troopers had got the habit of conversing with their steeds on their long solitary marches, "that you will be a very great ass if you commit any such folly." This reasoning perfectly satisfied the rider, and he allowed his horse to carry him over the most dangerous places without the slightest uneasiness. In spite of the wind, the cold, the rain, and the fog, we at last got without accident through the most difficult passes, and as soon as we had crossed the Roman ruins which command the gorges, the

road began to descend to the plateaux of Bel-Abbés.

This passage of the Roman ruins is renowned for its echoes. If you raise your voice among them, you hear the reverberation of your words running along from mountain to mountain, to the right, to the left, before, behind, the sound is repeated by a thousand different voices. If you question an ordinary Arab on the subject, he will tell you simply, *Ireud-el-Chitan* (Satan replies)—the place is cursed; but a *taleb* (a savant) will, in a low, suppressed voice give a very different version of the matter. “When the light,” he will say, “by the word of the messengers of the prophet, came from Mecca, the adorers of *Sidna Aissa* (Jesus Christ) shut their eyes to the truth, and refused to confess it. Then they retired into the fortresses of Tessalah, with their wives, their children, and their riches, believing that the stream would follow its course. But those who had the holy word did not advance against them till all heads had bowed, and all mouths had repeated, ‘There is no other God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet.’ The believers then assembled together, and besieged *the disdainers of good*. As heaven was on their side, God shut up the gate of waters, and for a whole year there

dropped not from the clouds a single drop of rain in Tessalah. The provision of water for baptism, was exhausted, and the Christians were tormented with thirst behind their great walls; but, harder than the stones, these slaves of the demon preferred death to confession, and all perished. That which is written is written; the birds of the air dispersed their flesh over the whole country, and their souls still circle about these hills and mountains, and repeating, to frighten travellers, every word they may utter." The traditions about the Christians among Mussulmen are all of the same character, they all terminate in the extermination of the infidels. In the north of Africa, there is only one tribe that has preserved any of the exterior signs of Christianity, that is to say, in the environs of Bougie, where the Kabyles of the mountains, when passing by any very dangerous place, will still make the sign of the cross.

At a little distance from the Roman ruins, near Bel-Abbés, the goums of that place were in waiting for us. The rain continuing to fall in torrents, we broke, as soon as the ground permitted it, into a quick trot, and at five o'clock our horses were picketed in the camp formed by two battalions of the foreign legion, who had their bivouac at Bel-Abbés.

This post, situated behind the first chain of mountains, sixteen leagues to the south, in the meridian of Oran, assured the security of the plain of the Melata, at the same time that it afforded the means of prompt supplies to our columns, in case of their being called upon to operate on the frontiers of the Tell and of the Sersous. Bel-Abbés, founded in 1843, and named *Biscuitville* by General Bedeau, completed the series of magazine posts which rose in two lines parallel to the sea, along the whole extent of the province of Oran. This was one of the causes of our success whenever the war became serious and decisive; the other was the establishment of Arab bureaux. The magazine-posts multiplied our resources, by bringing them always within reach, and the Arab bureau guaranteed their efficacious distribution. This bureau is the centralization of all the interests of the country in the hands of the military. Its chief holds the same place as did the former Turkish chiefs. His authority is sometimes direct, and sometimes transmitted through the *Aghas* and *Khalifats*. According to the usage of the country, the administration of justice in all civil affairs is placed in the hands of the Cadi, whilst in all political matters decisions rest

with the *Marghzen*; that is to say, virtually with the chief of the Arab bureau. It must be at once perceived, therefore, that the institution of these bureaux—the necessary centres of all information—must have powerfully contributed to our success.

The site of Bel-Abbés is so advantageous, that there was at this time some thought of making it the head-quarters of the Orleansville subdivision; and the General passed the day after our arrival in studying the different plans that had this object in view. In the evening, on his return, he found scouts in the camp, who had brought information that the Hamian Garabas, our enemies, had been seen on the heights of Tlemcen. Other scouts were therefore immediately sent out, to note exactly the position of the Garabas, and with orders, also, to proceed in four days to Tlemcen. The next day we set out for that city, under the escort of two fine squadrons of the African chasseurs; for, since the Beni-Hamer had been transported to Morocco by the Emir in 1845, the year of the great revolt, the whole country from Bel-Abbés to the Isér had been depopulated and abandoned to highway robbers. Some lions, whose footprints we several times recognised,

hyenas, and multitudes of wild boars, were now the only inhabitants of these fertile hills. We disturbed, however, their repose somewhat, for we gave chase to some of them vigorously: that is, to wild boars and hyenas, for the lion we held in too much respect to molest him. This chase was not without its dangers—not from the wild boars, for with a little address one might always avoid their tusks—but from the Arabs, who, in their eagerness to shoot the boars crossing our path, were often near shooting us.

The distance between Bel-Abbés and the Iser, where we were to bivouac, is considerable. It was dark when the little column reached the bank of the river. There was no moon and no stars, and we had to find a ford, for the stream is broad and rapid at this place. The first who attempted the passage was thrown, the second was not more fortunate, but the third reached the other bank. Lighting, then, branches of the wild jujube tree, which we plucked from neighbouring thickets, we placed these extemporised torches on the points of our sabres, and the troop passed over without accident. At daybreak the trumpets of the chasseurs sounded the *reveille*. It was a fine morning; the air was crisp and bracing, a few clouds shift-

ing about the sky, and the crests of the mountains shaped, to the east and to the south, like a horse-shoe, brought into full view the basin where the city of Tlemcen is situated. The Mansourah and its delightful water-springs, which spread fertility over all its environs, were just opposite to us; and on our left, a little behind, might be seen the hills of Eddis, where, in 1841, that solemn interview took place which resulted in the submission of a great part of the country.

In the winter of 1841-2, when General de Lamoriciere dealt from Mascara such heavy blows on the power of Abd-el-Kader, the authority of the Khalifat of the Emir, Bou-Hamedi, was seriously shaken in the west of the province. Mouley-Chirq-Ben-Ali was the instigator of this movement. His influence was great; for he had long governed the country as lieutenant of Mustapha-Ben-Tami, the former Khalifat of the Emir. Being dismissed by Bou-Hamedi, he swore to avenge himself; and this is the way in which he fulfilled his oath: His vengeance was a long-enduring one; he could “bide his time”—wait for the hour and the moment. He first visited all the tribes, and prepared them, by artful conversations, for a change. Then, at the favourable juncture, not feeling himself

strong enough to raise the standard of revolt himself, he cast his eyes upon a man whose power was much enhanced by his religious reputation. This man was Si-Mohamed-Ben-Abdallah, of the great tribe of the Ouled-Sidi-Chirq. The religious influence of this tribe of Marabouts extends from the oasis, where they have their retreat, to the borders of the sea. Having lived for many years in the country of Tlemcen, Mohamed-Ben-Abdallah enjoyed there a high character. His piety was talked of by every one. It was said that every Friday, going bare-footed to the tomb of Si-Bou-Medin, he passed the night in prayer ; and that, on quitting the holy place, where the Spirit from on high visited him, the words of God issued from his mouth.

Now it occurred to old Mustapha-Ben-Ismael, that, considering the agitation that prevailed in the neighbourhood of Tlemcen, and that Bou-Hamedi had not been able to attach to himself Mohamed-Ben-Abdallah, he might make use of this Marabout to attack the power of the Emir. On the report of Mustapha, therefore, General de Lamoriciere authorized our old ally to communicate on the subject with Mohamed-Ben-Abdallah. He was promised succour and protection ; and a

first meeting was agreed upon ; but on the 3rd of December, just when it was about to take place, Bou-Hamedi had occupied the road. Three weeks afterwards, this obstacle was removed. Mohamed demanded an interview a second time ; and Colonel Tempoure, reinforcing the goum of Mustapha with a little column of infantry, set out to accomplish this mission in dreadful weather. On the 28th, accompanied only by a few officers and Mustapha, he was on his route to meet the new chief.

The cavalry wound in long files along the ascents of the mountain. At their feet lay the valley of the Tafna, with its rich harvests ; and on the horizon appeared the white walls of Tlemcen, the City of Sultans. Suddenly, on turning the elbow on a mountain, hills and hillocks were seen covered with the people of the tribes. On both sides, the standards stopped, the horsemen remained motionless, and the chiefs advanced between these living hedges. Mustapha was the first to dismount ; he thus rendered homage, in the presence of all, to the religious character of Mohamed-Ben-Abdallah ; who, on his side, descending from his horse, pressed the old chief in his arms, without allowing him to show him any other mark of deference. Those who were present at this interview have

told me since, that Mustapha then, bowing to Colonel Tempoure, pronounced these words, “This day is the happiest of my life; for it will see the birth of friendship and esteem between the French and so venerated a person as you are. Thanks be to the All-powerful, this is the commencement of a union between the two races, under the protection of the great Sultan of France. As for me, my remaining days cannot be employed more beneficially than in endeavouring to procure and promote the peace of the country, and to elevate still higher, O Mohamed! thy house, already so illustrious amongst us.”

Mustapha then, with a dignity that never left him, pointed to a little clump of young palm trees, and all sitting down in a circle, the conference commenced. As soon as it was over, Colonel Tempoure offered to the Arab chief the usual presents of honour, and then they all rose. The chiefs having mounted, there was a group about Mohamed; when, rising in his stirrup, the Marabout pronounced the prayer that was to call down a benediction on their enterprises. His ardent eye; his pale, fatigued features, which spoke of prayers and watchings; and his grave and austere voice, gave an imposing solemnity to the scene.

“Oh, God! God! compassionate and merciful,” cried Mohamed, “we supplicate Thee to give peace to our unhappy country, desolated by a cruel war.” And the voices of his two thousand cavaliers repeated the sentence in its whole length. “O God! compassionate and merciful, we supplicate Thee to give peace to our unhappy country, desolated by a cruel war.” “Have pity,” resumed the chief, lifting up his eyes to heaven, “have pity on this population reduced to misery. Send abundance and happiness in the midst of us. Give us the victory over the enemies of our country; and grant that Thy holy religion, revealed by Thy prophet, may be for ever triumphant.” And his warriors repeated as with one voice, “Give us the victory over the enemies of our country, and grant that Thy holy religion, revealed by Thy prophet, may be for ever triumphant.”

The reverberation of this prayer reached the ears of Bou-Hamedi, and revealed to him the extreme perilousness of his position. The hour was indeed approaching when Tlemcen was to become a French city, and for ever.

As soon as intelligence of these important events reached Marshal Bugeaud, he saw, with

his usual rapidity of judgment, to what account they might be turned, and lost no time in quitting Algiers. On the 20th January he disembarked at Oran; and on the 24th of February—that is, just outside the space of a month—after having destroyed the citadel of Zebdou and occupied Tlemcen, he took his departure from that city, leaving General Bedeau, who had been summoned from Mostaganem for the purpose, in command of its sub-division.

In Tlemcen, General Bedeau gave fresh evidence of those regular methodical talents which made him, when his duties were precisely marked out, and he knew the exact limit of his authority, so valuable an agent. Tlemcen soon rose out of its ruins; barracks sprung up as if by enchantment, and the whole country received a wise practical organization. Frequently, however, was the General called upon to contest points of great importance—but as there was no hesitation in his mind, there was none in his success. The country of Tlemcen is nevertheless not easy to govern. It has been at all times a theatre of strife, for, many centuries ago, Si Mohamed-el-Medjebou said of it, “Tlemcen is a rugged bit, that breaks the scythe of the reaper. How often have women,

children, and old men been abandoned within its walls!" The history of this city is indeed, from its famous siege in 1286, by Abi-Said, brother of Abou-Yacoub, the Sultan of Fez, who for seven years remained before it, and built in his camp a city, the ruins of which still exist, to the blockade which the Commandant Cavaignac sustained with the free battalion behind its walls in 1837, but a continuous history of war.

The province of Oran has had a singular destiny. It has been, as it were, a listed field where the Christian and the Mussulmen have met to fight out their last battle. In the year 1509, Cardinal Ximines, the cross in his hand, went through the ranks of the Spanish troops, drawn up in battle array, on the banks of the Bay of Andalusia, exhorting the men to flinch from no danger to exterminate the infidel. In the year 1516, nevertheless, two pirates, invited by the chief of the city of Algiers, founded in Africa the Turkish power, which was never to retreat but before the banner of France ; yet it was not without obstinate struggles against the Spanish arms that the Mussulman dominion was established, for Oran was an advanced post, and, in her occupation of Africa, the prime object of Spain was the security

of her coasts. Christians and Islamites encountered each other often in the struggles before the walls of Tlemeen. Finally, the Kings of Tlemeen, whose authority extended from the banks of the Mou-louia to the mountains of Bougie, and who trafficked with the galliots of Venice, came to the port of Oran for wax, oil, and wools, and were obliged not only to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Kings of Spain, but to implore their protection. Barberousse, the famous pirate, attacked them in the very seat of their power; and the Spaniards came to the succour of their vessels. Barberousse was killed in the action, and his waistcoat transformed into church copes, ornamented afterwards, as a trophy of victory, the sacristie of the cathedral of Cordova. So that it appears that at whatever period we may contemplate the history of Tlemeen, the words of Mahomed of the Golden Mouth are true. But a knowledge of history is required to believe this; for a traveller who had never heard of the country, and had travelled with us, would rather have thought that the city could never have been other than an asylum of repose and tranquillity.

We arrived at the bridge thrown by the Turks over the Safsaf. Great olive orchards, which

shadow the whole country, and looked like the verdant pedestal of the city, were spread before us. Nothing can be conceived more graceful and more charming than the town itself. Its white houses lean in one quarter against the side of a rocky mountain, whence fall magnificent cascades and gushing water springs. At the base of the mountain is a rich belt of odoriferous gardens, whilst in the distance hills succeed to hills, and mountains to mountains, till they mix with and fade away in the blue sky.

Beyond the bridge we saw General Cavaignac and the officers of the garrison coming to meet General Lamoriciere, for General Bedeau had been appointed to the government of the province of Constantine. The two chiefs advanced, General Cavaignac first, as military discipline required, and gave the regular salute ; but his icy coldness, and his silence after he had uttered some few words of formal politeness, were remarked by all. *A small cause produces often a great effect*, says the proverb ; and the proverb, on this occasion, spoke the truth ; for it was some little oversight, which General Cavaignac had interpreted into a slight, that explained the gravity of his present bearing.

Absolute in command, energetic in action, slow

in his decisions, because slow in comprehension, hiding laborious thought under solemn silence, and never speaking till his resolution is made up, General Cavaignac was esteemed by all, loved by a few, and feared by many. Those, however, who had been brought into close connexion with him, were unanimous in declaring, that when his heart was appealed to, the stately dignity in which he loved to envelop himself disappeared, and gave place to a benevolence thoroughly paternal ; but these moments were rare. The silence and the isolation in which he by preference lived, made him proudly suspicious ; and the subdued fire of his eye indicated plainly that self-sacrifice was his ruling principle, even when his own promotion was in question ; for this justice must be done him that, though he has risen high, he has never sought advancement ; he is too proud for that. He seems to have ever had some model of perfection before him, and preferring his own opinion to the opinion of the world, he has at last come, by this singularity, to adopt sentiments the most alien to his natural character. In his military career General Cavaignac has given numerous proofs of imperturbable obstinacy. He obtained his grade of commandant at Tlemeen, in

1836, at the time of the expedition of Marshal Clausel, when he defended himself in that city for six months, deprived of all aid, and cut off from all news beyond its walls. This was one of the most distinguished acts of his military life. But he has never been wanting in war, when war offered him an opportunity of confronting danger and contending with difficulties.

Our silent progress embarrassed the General, so putting spurs to our horses, we rode rapidly through the gardens of Tlemcen, blessing the kings to whom the country partly owes its fertility. For it was the kings of Tlemcen who constructed the basin, where so many waters meet before they irrigate the surrounding plain. This basin is so large, that before it was repaired, a squadron of cavalry often manœuvred in it. Tlemcen is divided into two enclosures. The city and its houses, one story high, are grouped within a fortified wall, called *Mechouar*, built by the ancient kings. The *Mechouar* now contains excellent barracks and military establishments. The House of Guests, where the General dismounted, is in the first enclosure. On his arrival he immediately, as usual, addressed himself to business, and conferred with General Cavaignac, especially

about the establishment of the new colonists, almost all of them old discharged soldiers, brave fellows, strong and healthy, but unmarried. To found a colony, however, the family is necessary, and the family was wanting; so to meet this crying want, the two Generals made wholesale marriage propositions to the institution of female orphans, at Marseilles! and these wedded orphans are now, doubtless, prosperous proprietors and mothers of families in the neighbourhood of Tlemcen.

In the evening whilst we were occupied in writing, under the dictation of the General, in a little Mauresque room, of an oblong form, two Arab cavaliers came to the door. They were the two couriers who had been sent from Bel-Abbes to the high plateaux, to gain information about the Hamian-Garabas. The physiognomies and whole appearance of these men were remarkable enough to be described. Seated on the ground, their arms hidden under their burnous, the perfect calm of their features made their bright eyes— whence now and then sudden glances would dart—shine the brighter, though they were veiled the instant afterwards, and all their intelligence and cunning concealed under a look of the utmost

simplicity. One might recognise in them at once men accustomed to ambushes, apt at doubling like the hare, or following a scent like the hound. Robbers on the highway, and ready for any crime if well paid, but honest and conscientious in abiding faithfully by their promises, they were valuable agents, whom General de Lamoriciere knew better than any one else how to turn to account. Seated on a little tabouret in front of them, he kept his eye upon them, reading the expression of their faces. They exchanged words in a low voice, and the vacillating light of a bougie, on a table a little way off, now threw a flickering brightness on the singular group, and then left them in the shade. At last the General rose, and after taking long strides up and down the room for five minutes, puffing rapid puffs from his cigar, as was his habit when anything agitated him, seized abruptly upon his kepi, and went off to General Cavaignac's. The razzia was decided upon. As the Hamians-Garabas had been imprudent enough to come within the cast of the net, the opportunity of catching them was not to be passed by. Orders were immediately given, and the last despatches being written, we betook ourselves to the circle where the officers of the

garrison were assembled; for Tlemcen is a city where there are many amusements—not only a theatre, but Spanish women with provoking smiles. To General Bedeau it owes all this, and even now the inhabitants talk of the day when his regiments and his artillery train, crowned with green boughs, entered the city, with bands playing, drums beating, and trumpets flourishing, as one of the most auspicious in its whole history.

In two days General Cavaignac marched towards the south, whilst our route lay in the direction of Lela Marghnia, the nearest post to the frontier of Morocco.

## III.

All accustomed to long marches must know how to while away their time as pleasantly as possible, and we had all made long marches enough to be quite *au fait* at the work. Almost every brook, stone, and hill, had some anecdote attached to it. I remember well how heartily some of our companions, who had never crossed this country before, laughed when they heard of the tricks a lion had played General Lamoriciere's column in 1844, and the vengeance the General took on the brute afterwards.

The column about to establish the post of Lela-Marghnia, being overtaken by floods between the Tafna and the Mouila, was obliged to encamp. The country was safe, notwithstanding the proximity of the frontier, but as three or four lions had been seen roaming about the environs for some time past, the General gave orders

that the flocks should be protected by barricades of brushwood and trunks of trees, and that the guard should keep a sharp look out. These orders being executed, the soldiers lay down, and were soon fast asleep. Half of the night had passed, the rain fell in torrents, and the sentries, thinking themselves perfectly safe, sheltered themselves as well as they could under their camp coverings, when a loud roaring was heard close to the camp, and three or four black objects were seen at some distance ; whereupon the flock, immediately taking fright, fled hither and thither, and bleating all the time, in all directions, upsetting men, tents, the barricades, and everything. A lion, who had made his appearance among them in search of his day's prey, was the cause of all this turmoil. On the following day, the country was beaten up on all sides, but only four oxen—a poor supply for eighteen hundred men—were discovered. But though for the moment the alarm subsided, the General continued to entertain a grudge against the lion. “Never mind !” said he, “never mind ! I will be up with him yet ; he laughs well who laughs last !” And passing by this spot some time after, put an ox, tied to a tree, in ambush. The ox bellowed, the lion heard

him, and by the light of a brilliant moon, set off in search of the supper Providence had sent him. On arriving within twenty paces of the animal, he stretched out his fore paws, licked his jaws with delight, and roared; then with one bound sprang upon his prey, and tore off a shoulder with one claw; but he was not left long to enjoy his victim, for at this moment five shots were fired at him, and he fell sprawling and roaring terrifically. His skin was sent to Chateau-Neuf as a trophy, and the other lions having spread the intelligence of his fate among their herds, never dared attack General Lamoriciere's column again. Such, at least, was the moral tacked to the tale.

On that day we halted near a fountain of hot springs. The landscape about us was of as singular a character as ever was seen. The ground covered with the dark foliage of the olive tree —the whole basin gloomy in the extreme. But suddenly, at the turn of the road, it seemed as if the wand of an enchanter had conjured up a garden of Eden. Enormous palm trees threw out their secular boughs, woven together by the branches and tendrils of great vines, whilst under this dense dome of verdure, the hot bubbling waters bathed the roots of the gigantic trees. The

imagination of the poet, in his most capricious moods, has never pictured a scene of more exquisite beauty. One almost fancied the Genius of these enchanting shades was on the point of appearing. If ever you hear the legend of Muley-Ismael about these palm groves, your heart will be wrung with pity. Shall I tell it you?

“In ages long gone by, the kings of Tlemeen kept up an intercourse with the *lapidés*.\* These kings, who came from the west, were called Beni-Meriin; they could interpret the language of thunder, and by mysterious combinations of ciphers, or by throwing sand upon a black table, could predict the future, punishing those who had offended them by the aid of their demoniacal allies.

“Now it happened that one of these Beni-Meriin was captivated by the appearance of a young girl whom he met one day on the banks of the Tafna, whither she had gone to draw water. Proud of his power, he believed that a single word from him would secure him a new slave, but the young girl had given her heart to a warrior of her own

\* According to Mussulman belief, the rebel angels were driven from Heaven with stones, and it is on this account that the name of *lapidé* has been given to demons.

tribe, and she listened to the silvery words of the Sultan with disdain. Furious at the repulse—for though all-powerful to avenge himself, he could not, like his allies, the demons, gain the love of her whom he adored, and this was his punishment—the king swore that he would feast upon the tears of the maiden who had refused him a smile. One evening, then, when the young girl, clandestinely leaving the douar, had gone to meet her lover under the palm-trees, the Sultan called the *lapidé* to his assistance, who, at his orders, seized upon the two lovers and disappeared with them under the earth; and the whole face of the country was from that moment changed! The valley of flowers was gone, and dark olive trees covered the hills. The palm trees, under which the lovers had met, alone remained, for at the spot where they disappeared, there sprang up a miraculous fountain, which is nothing else than the fountain of their tears, which they shed night and day in the bowels of the earth, where the sorceries of evil spirits keep them in captivity."

The post of Lela Marghnia, where we arrived in the evening, is a quarter of a league distant from the frontier, and separated by a plain, six leagues long,

from the Morocco city of Ouchda. In this immense plain, intersected by the *Oued-Isly*, clouds of Morocco cavalry, denser than serried swarms of grasshoppers, were scattered to the winds by our battalion under the command of Marshal Bugeaud, in one of those glorious encounters in which discipline overpowered multitudes. This was a glorious epoch for France, for I can assure you that, a month afterwards, the tri-colour—the cannonadings of the Prince de Joinville contributing thereto—was saluted with respect and with fear along all the coast of Morocco. The martial tints of Horace Vernet have perpetuated on canvass those battle scenes, or, rather, represented the *fête* after the battle. In one angle of the picture alone, is a battalion seen advancing to the charge to the sound of the trumpet, with their commander at their head, who seems to be rushing on to meet the death which met him a year afterwards at the Marabout of Sidi-Brahim.

When General Cavaignac's column marched for the first time through this country, three months after the engagement, the bones scattered over the ground might clearly point out all the different phases of the fight. Here the charge commenced, here it stopped; a little further was

the last skeleton. On this spot the column halted, and, forming a square, the blanched bones being piled together, defiled before them, thus rendering solemn homage to the brave who had fallen in battle. A week afterwards two battalions of infantry, and Colonel de Cotte's regiment of cavalry were sent expressly to convey these relics of heroism to Djema. The Abbé Suchet accompanied the party, and under the vault of heaven, in the midst of soldiers and the suppressed clatter of their arms, a funeral service was performed. Then the ranks opened, and the pious burthen was borne away. Having passed over the ground of this heroic defence, we saw, about two hundred paces from Djema, under the shade of branching carol trees, in the middle of a meadow, a rude funereal monument that had been raised over others of our soldiers fallen in action. Before this tomb every one uncovered his head, and soldiers and officers, without distinction, grouped together around it. In five minutes more we were at Djema. This post is built on the sea coast, at the mouth of a little river between two steep shores, whence may be perceived ruined villages, formerly the refuges of pirates. Wooden barracks, a battlemented wall, large magazines,

and cabarets ; on the coast, a few fishing boats and marine stores ; out at sea, one or two brigs, sometimes a war steamer ; and, in the midst of all this, bustling soldiers, hucksters and traders. Take this picture into your eye, and Djema is before you.

This is a dull place, and in time of peace sporting and study are the only resources of those who are condemned to a garrison life in one of these advanced posts. In France many may be surprised at this. They can hardly imagine men with swarthy complexions and long beards bending over books, and devoting their leisure to scientific researches, or literary recreations. Nevertheless, such is the case, and these habits of study form one of the characteristic peculiarities of the African army. This tendency has always been encouraged by its chiefs. There is at present a library at every post, composed of about three hundred volumes of the best authors, scientific and literary. These works must needs oftentimes powerfully mollify the minds of their readers, and now that the generation of soldiers formed by the Algerian war is likely to exert a great influence on the future destinies of France, the kind of reading the African campaigner most addicts himself

to would be a curious and interesting subject of inquiry. Assuredly some curious traits of character would be discovered, for all read, and all read much. No doubt it would be absurd to suppose that the African army is an army of *savants*; but it is certain that among its officers, and soldiers too, one may meet with more intelligence and more literature than is usually found in military men. And for this simple reason: the mind requires change and variety. When one is forced for long months to live shut up with the same people, weariness soon ensues; and the recreation one can no longer find in camp companionship, is sought for and found in books—the legacies of those immortal men who, from age to age, bequeath the mind of each generation to generations following, as a viaticum and solace to a race condemned to toil and suffering.

Though the dead charm, the living have the stronger claims upon us, and never does one meet a friend with so much pleasure as at an advanced post. How glad was I, then, to meet at Djema one of my best friends and pleasantest companions. We had just dined in the barrack where we had our officers' mess. The dining room, I must need confess, was not so elegant as the salons of the

*Frères Provençaux.* Deal planks were the substitute for sculptured panels, and joint-stools did duty for cushioned chairs. The wine was blue too, I assure you, beautifully blue; but we were all young, free from care, full of buoyancy, and with a consciousness of a frank uprightness of heart that we should be ever able to preserve. This is one of the reasons why soldiers are always light-hearted and jovial. After dinner we went, that is my comrade and myself, to smoke our cigars on the beach, where the waves just rolled their shelly murmurs up to our feet. The vessels out at sea, inclining gently to the surge, seemed to be rocked softly to and fro, by the trembling light of the bright moon; and the silence of the earth and of the ocean, whence one seemed to catch the distant echo of mysterious voices, carried our thoughts back to France. Leaning on the side of a stranded boat, we were deep in our reveries, when my companion suddenly exclaimed:

“Oh! what a lovely evening, how I should like to be in Paris!”

“And what would you do there?”

“I am almost inclined to tell you something I have never told you before; but in such weather as this I am always in love.”

“Indeed !”

“Yes, and though God knows, I am very well pleased to be here, I should yet like to be in Paris.”

“But it might freeze there—for this, mind, is the month of January.”

“What does weather signify at Paris ? I tell you I am in love, only I forget all about it except on such evenings as this. It was on just such an evening last August, that the sensation first came over me. I have never spoken to her, and indeed would not for worlds do so.”

“What nonsense you are talking.”

“Nonsense ! it is not so nonsensical as you think, I can assure you ! Listen to what I have to say and then call it what you like. I was walking along the Boulevards last August, and though the weather was magnificent, I was weary and out of sorts, when passing before the Gymnase, I saw posted up in large letters ‘Clarissa Harlowe.’ Now I had always had a weakness for Clarissa, so fearing to see her misrepresented, I resolved within myself not to enter, but my cigar going out just at that moment, whilst I was at the door, altered my determination. I took it for an omen, and in I went. Ah ! if I could tell you !

After the first scene, I was moved ; at the second scene, I wept ; and at the third, was quite out of my senses. I stormed against Lovelace ; I was madly in love with Clarissa. I was to leave Paris in four days, but four times I returned to the Gymnasium. All this while I was perfectly happy, and the sensations I then experienced come over me afresh, on such an evening as this. But she was so deserving ! so confiding in her love ! so grateful ! and then how she died ! Now you know why I am in love this evening ; fortunately, it is not always so fine. Tell me, do you know what it is to be in love ?”

“ I believe,” replied I, “ that the poet was quite right when he said—

‘ L’amour, hélas ! l’étrange et la fausse nature,  
Vit d’inanition et meurt de nourriture !’

But that Arab there, who is walking with Manuel the Spaniard, will doubtless have a definition ready for you ;” and without awaiting for my comrade’s reply, I called the Arab, whom I had just recognised, by his name.

“ Caddour ! come here. Will you take a cigar ? They are good ; I bought them of Dolorita d’Oran.”

“Yes,” said he, after having returned my salute. “Is there any news?”

“Not that I know of,” replied I.

“Well?”

“Here is a friend of mine who wishes to ask you a question. His thoughts are in France; he has brought with him thence a souvenir; he does not know, however, whether this souvenir is in his head or in his heart, and he has asked me to tell him exactly what love is. My answer does not please him. Now tell me your opinion on the subject.”

“Have you ever seen a little bird seek shelter under a tent when winter brings cold, snow, and icy rain?” asked Caddour. “The poor little thing enjoys comfort and warmth for a moment, when the force of instinct makes it fly again into the open air, and into suffering. That which the warmth of the tent is, for a second, to the little bird, love is to man—merely a halt to recover strength. But to those whom God appoints to do great things, He gives great living hearts.”

“This does not appear to me quite clear,” replied my friend, “and Manuel can perhaps explain the matter better.”

“Yes,” replied Manuel, a bronze-cheeked

Spaniard, whose kindling eye and straight-out rapid glance betokened a decided character.— “I remember a song that the women of Grenada often sing ; it comes, I believe, from the Moors.”

And he sang in a slow, good, grave voice, the words of a Spanish romance, of which the following is a translation :—

“ When in the beginning God furnished the world, he withdrew from it the light of His countenance, and from the sun, the reflection of God, its perfect brightness ; and grey clouds and dim days then, for the first time, saddened the earth.

“ In mercy, however, one ray was left, and this ray is transmitted from soul to soul. Happy are those into whom it shines ! It saves them from death, and unites them to God. Love is this ray, love the last link between heaven and earth.

“ But as the ray of mercy from the sky, which makes the happiness of Angels, remained, the spirit of the evil one was jealous.

“ And from the depths of the earth there came out a belching fire, and its flame spread also from soul to soul. Then many suffered, and all said love has put us to great pain.

“ And all were deluded, and Satan laughed,

for he sowed despair every where, and souls flocked to him.

“If in a morning thoughts from on high diffuse the joys of virtue through your frame, encourage your heart and say, ‘I love.’

“If wrapt up solely in devotion, encourage your heart and say ‘I love.’

“If, forgetting yourself, you wish only for the happiness of her who fills your thoughts, encourage your heart and say ‘I love.’

“The smoke of hell is far from you, the light of heaven is within you; fear not.”

“Friend,” said my companion, when his last note had been borne away by the breeze, “there is a strong perfume of the jessamines of Granada in your song, I can almost fancy I hear the murmurs of the waters in the gardens of Généralife: but let’s have done with discussions. What matter systems? That which is written is written. If I am to understand and feel love, I shall understand and feel it; that is to say, if the world does not come to an end first.”

“You infidels mock at every thing,” said Caddour. “Pray that you may never see the time which will precede the end of all things.”

“What will there be, then, so very extraordinary?”

“Those times have been predicted,” said Caddour, “and when the cup of iniquity shall be full, the iron bands which enclose the race of terrible men between the crags of the two mountains will fly asunder, and they will scour over the world to devour all things, drinking up the rivers till they are dry, destroying the fruits and trees, and scattering everywhere on their passage carnage and death.”

“Lieutenant, the General wishes to see you with Caddour,” said at this moment an orderly, who had been looking for me all over the camp for the last quarter of an hour.

“Very well, I will go immediately. Is that the way the world will end?” said I, walking away in the direction of the barrack where the General had dismounted.

“No,” replied Caddour, “for God is merciful, and Si-Aïssa (our Saviour), who is not dead, will come down from heaven to restore peace in the world.”

“So be it,” added my comrade. “Never mind, we have had a good story. Caddour, good-bye; come and breakfast with me to-morrow; you have so brilliant an imagination that I must cultivate your acquaintance.”

“When he has been three years in the country,”

said Caddour, as he entered with me the General's quarters, "your friend will laugh less, and believe more."

It was not to hold any discussion upon love that General Lamoriciere had sent for us. We were called to write long, tiresome despatches about the state of the province, the corn markets, and the victualling department. Happily, however, the work was at last over, and next day there was nothing to detain us at Djema. *Puce Ville* was the name that had been given to the town, and this name alone will account for the alacrity with which we left it. The road to Oran passed by Nedroma before crossing the Kabyle mountains. The General took with him a little column, commanded by Colonel MacMahon, that he might, on his way, not only decide some questions that had arisen between the French authority and the Kabyles, but also, in case of need, punish those who might refuse to submit to his judgment. Nedroma, where the General received the *diffa*, is a town delightfully shaded with trees, and surrounded by good solid walls. Its inhabitants are rich, industrious, and skilful, but loving money so much, say the satirical, that they care very little whence it comes, that is, how it has been obtained.

On leaving Nedroma, we immediately escaladed the Kabyle mountains. All along the road, the natives were furious at being obliged to submit; but paid their taxes without a word. The sight of Colonel MacMahon's column made them as quiet as lambs; and they had every reason to be so, for it was well known that the Colonel was no trifler. Everything went on, then, quite pleasantly; and, having regained the plain, before crossing the hill which led to the post of Ain Temouchen, upon the road from Tlemcen to Oran, we enjoyed a capital hare-hunt. During the chase, the General received despatches, announcing the success of the *coup de main* on the Hamian Garabas. After marching for twenty-five hours, General Cavaignac had reached them, and cut them to pieces. This was our last fine day. The rain commenced falling in torrents in the night. "*The devil is beating his wife,*" they say in France, when it rains. There must be a devil's wife in Africa, who is very subject to shedding tears; for nothing but emptying buckets of water as fast as possible can give one the slightest idea of what these never-ceasing rains are. How pleasant the ground here at Sidour, the *Brie*, of the province of Oran, was for our horses! We slipped into it, we paddled about,

and above all, we swore; for muleteers and officers are very much alike, when once they become engaged. At length we reached Aïn-Temouchen, where we warmed ourselves in safety.

When the insurrection of 1845 broke out, the post of Aïn-Temouchen had a very small supply of cartridges. The news of this post having been taken, for want of ammunition, was expected every instant, and yet there was not a soldier to be had, nor any means of sending any supply. Colonel Walsin-Esterasy commanding the Arab guns, however, under these critical circumstances, undertook the enterprise. Though the only Frenchman among all the Arabs, of whom there were five hundred, and though this body could hardly be relied on, and were half-a-day's march from the Emir, whose forces were very numerous, the Colonel did not hesitate for one instant. He gave orders to march, a Caïd objected; he repeated the order, the Caïd refused to carry it into execution; the Colonel taking his pistol, blew his brains out. Directly afterwards another man was guilty of the same act of audacity and met with the same fate. By this proof of decision, the Colonel managed to keep the Arabs in submission, and to convey the ammunition of which there was so much need,

to Aïn-Temouchen. This neighbourhood calls to mind many heroic souvenirs, and *the Defile of Flesh* (Chabat-el-Lhâme), by which the route passes, bears witness by its name to the courage of those thousand Spaniards, the glorious precursors of our soldiers of Sidi-Brahim. Overpowered by numbers, they fell facing the enemy one by one. Captain Balboa, says Marmol, died there with all his soldiers, who refused to surrender, fighting valiantly until they were killed, and Martinez was led to Tlemcen with only thirteen prisoners. Of all the Spaniards twenty alone escaped, and these retreated to Oran under an escort of guides.

It is very probable that the twenty Spaniards mentioned by the chronicler were under more disagreeable circumstances than ourselves, yet I am sure that it was impossible for them to reach the town more rapidly than we did, for the rain is by far too unpleasant a travelling companion for any one to linger longer than he can possibly help. We arrived at Oran in the evening, and at the expiration of two days a departure was in contemplation. General Lamoriciere was about to return to France, in order to attend the Chamber; his ardent spirit rejoiced in the prospect of the new battles which awaited him, and

he thought of them with pleasure. We, however, remained in Africa, and saw him part with the greatest regret. The good wishes that we addressed to him when we pressed his hand on the day of his departure were sincere. Have these good wishes brought good fortune to General Lamoriciere? This question may be answered by those who have followed him through his political career.

Since this period, a great number of the companions whom the bivouac brought together, are separated; each now follows his own destiny, but they have none of them forgotten either the roads in the province of Oran, or the long gossips at Chateau-Neuf.

## THE KABYLE EXPEDITION.

MAY, JUNE, JULY, 1851.

THOUGH Ali-Ben-Hamed had been a *mauvais sujet* in his youth, he was, of all those who visited the *Café* of Si Lakdar, at Constantine, my most intimate friend. His manners were uncouth, no doubt, but why complain of his ignorance of the refinements of civilization, of which we are so proud? A soldier in the service of the Bey, rich and poor by turns, patient and calm always; after discharging his last gun from the ramparts, in 1837, he retained nothing of the service but his moustachios, and that proud look of a domineering race which particularly distinguishes the Turk.

Towards the end of last April, being very anxious and restless at the idea that I should not be one of the party of the Kabyle expedition

whose departure was fixed for the commencement of the month of May, I took a stroll on the little square platform which is called the Place de Constantine, when Ali suddenly occurred to my mind. I had more than once got him to speak between those long puffs of tobacco, that he is so delighted in exhaling from the very depths of his lungs, and on these occasions we had exchanged stories of past times which always appear the pleasantest times of one's life. "He will perhaps relieve me," said I to myself, "from my *ennui*," so striding down the hill on the Rummel side, I struck into the narrow streets or rather lanes of the old town. The Café of Si-Likdar, is situated in the centre of the Arab quarter of Constantine, not far from a square, where several streets noted for traffic meet. The streets of the *weaver*, of the *saddler*, of the *restaurateur*, and of the *blacksmith*, cross each other just by this spot, where, no doubt, the Café was established on account of its central position. Here foreigners and the learned (of whom Constantine possesses a great many), come to enjoy, as they say, at least themselves, repose of mind; and surely the long vine twining its luxuriant tendrils along by arches overhead and all round, and the jasmine, and the roses,

and the really good music one hears there, might procure them this blessing. As I entered, Caddour, the landlord, saluted me, as was his wont, with a cordial *bon jour*, and I took my place by the side of some old Turks, friends of Ali, with whom I had often fought desperate battles at their favourite game of draughts. Ali was doubtless as much out of sorts as myself, for he answered all my questions with monosyllables. So at last, getting impatient, I called for draughts and fig brandy, a beverage, despite the precepts of the Koran, much relished by the Turks, and then commenced an obstinate combat with one of the guests of the Café.

Our backs leaning against the pillars that supported the building, and our legs crossed upon mats, we soon became so absorbed in our game as not to heed the clamorous crowd elbowing each other at two feet distance, in a street not more than four feet broad. I was just on the point of being beaten, and was thinking how I could best parry the last decisive blows of my antagonist, Ould-Adda, a Turk, when five or six guns rolling on our draft-board, upset all our wooden soldiers. A Kabyle gunsmith going home had stumbled, and fallen with his load.

“Son of a demon!” exclaimed my companion

in misfortune, and immediately, without saying a word, regained his composure.

“What made you call him so?” said I, when the damage was repaired.

“The fellow bears the stamp of him who created him!” replied the Turk. “These heads of stone keep the mark of their origin. The word of the Prophet, it is true, is wrapped round them as a garment, but it has never pierced deeper than the skin. They desert their country, they visit foreign lands, they force hands to labour, and that, not to satisfy wants, but to amass wealth. But riches should be gained, if coveted, not by toil, but by the sword. It is said that in the mountains of these savages there is no authority, that every one is a law to himself, that their women wear no veils, and that on fête days they dance like buffoons. With their blue eyes and their big bodies, and their legs enveloped in bad woollen wrappers, they look like what they are, the servants of the *Lapidé* (Satan)! Like animals, their bare skulls are exposed to the sun, and in winter they will shake the snow from their heads, like oxen.”

“As bran never becomes flour, so an enemy never becomes a friend,” here broke in Ali, after

his long silence. "You have not forgotten Ould-Adda, your son, whom they killed in the day of combat, and bitter remembrances prompt your tongue. But every tree bears its fruit ; the plant that flourishes by the side of a fountain, would die on the top of a hill. The mountain has rocks, and the mountain has Kabyles. In the plain you will find wheat, flocks with rich fleeces, and Arabs for inhabitants. The two races are different, and their sentiments sound differently, that is all. In the plain, as in the mountain, the demon has his followers, and God his worshippers. You should despise no Mussulman ; every one follows his own path."

"How is it," said I, "that you do not share the hatred that is so generally entertained for them by your people?"

"I have studied them," replied he, "and, beneath rude exteriors, have found much goodness. I may well take their part, for I owe my life entirely to the respect each of these savages bears towards any one of his race. I was a soldier at that time in the service of Osman Bey, and witnessed the disaster alluded to. 'You are going,' they say, 'to make an incursion into their country. If the arm of God directs your

blows, success will accompany you. God alone can give it you. The Kabyle, when defending his wife, his property, and his village, is like the panther protecting its young. Why go and seek them?"

"Have you ever seen oil drop upon cloth?" asked I; "the spot increases gradually, until it at length reaches the last thread of the stuff. It is the same with us. We must absorb the whole of this country; besides, these mountains have become the refuge of rebels, and the ramparts of robbers. All who injure us are their friends, and our villages have been menaced. We, however, did not come here to suffer injuries. A horse not broken in will throw his rider, and it is our will to be masters of this country."

"The truth is in your mouth," said Ali, after a moment's reflection. "You are right; but you will find a very different country from any you have yet seen. Days scarce suffice to descend their precipices. The sides of their mountains are full of villages, so built as to be secure from a *coup de main*, whilst their warriors, as brave as lions, have well practised eyes and good guns. Even in times of peace, they play at war, for there is no *fête* where the firelock levelled to the eye

does not play a great part, and he who hits most eggs suspended by a thread which forms a kind of target, bears off the palm. The Kabyle is so sure a shot, that he is said to carry his enemy's life in his eye. No one knows how to choose and defend a post better than he. He is a good protector also of his own people, for he never forgets an injury ; vengeance is often with him an heir-loom, and though the penalty of death is not written in his laws, it is written in blood for many offences between man and man, and family and family. Banishment is, however, regarded the severest punishment. In time of peace, when they addict themselves to commerce, to the fabrication of tissues, arms, and powder—and may God chasten them for it—false wares, to cheat the Arabs in the plains, the commandment is, notwithstanding, for ever in their mouths. As for authority, there is none among them ; they bow only before their Marabouts. Even the decisions of the assembly nominated by themselves, are subject to the approbation of each of them, and at certain times public criers go from village to village, calling upon the inhabitants to sanction or reject them, but a common enemy unites them all in what they call a *soff* (alliance). Tribes then

mix with tribes, and chiefs with chiefs, one only being proclaimed *the master of death*. He it is, to use their own expression, ‘who fixes the combat, and guides the arm.’ Of powder, I can tell you, they have an abundant stock, and their defenders are numerous; for, from the moment a child can lift a gun, he is inscribed among them, and till his hand trembles with age, he owes his blood to the defence of his country. The chiefs, in the service of all, take care that the arms are in good order. At *the hour of powder* the youngest are armed with knotty sticks, to dispatch the fallen by beating them about the head and body; they amuse themselves too by throwing stones into the enemies’ ranks, and they carry off the wounded. The women themselves excite the fury of the men by their screams and by their songs, for among the Kabyles they are as masculine, both in confronting danger and in suffering, as their husbands, who, should they show fear in action, or run away, would be branded by their wives with a coal mark on their haiks—which is considered emphatically as the brand of a coward. Now you are going to smell powder as you have never felt it, or heard its explosions before, but, if it pleases God, you will return, for he is the master of our destinies.”

Ali appeared, in his heart, to doubt of the fulfilment of his wish, and as I was about to reply, added, "if any evil should befall you, or yours, recollect the *Anaya*,"\* and forget not that women can give it you. Their hearts are more easily moved than men's. It is to a woman that I owe my life."

"I do not know what you are speaking about. What is the *Anaya*?"

"The *Anaya*," replied he, "is in the mountains, the proof of the respect in which every man is held by himself and by others, his title to consideration, his right to protection. His wife, his oxen, his fields, are nothing to the Kabyle, in comparison with the *Anaya*. Anything recognised as having belonged to one entitled to bestow this talisman, is, in almost all cases, a sure safeguard. On quitting the territory of one tribe, the traveller possessing the *Anaya*, may exchange the pledge he has received for another, which will be given him by the friend to whom he carries it, and thus from tribe to tribe he may traverse the whole

\* The most interesting details respecting the *Anaya* and the Kabyle customs will be found in the *Grande Kabylie*, a very remarkable work, written by General Daumas and Captain Fabar.

country in complete security. There is also the *Anaya*, which is only required in cases of pressing danger, and he who possesses this protection, though the knife were at his throat, would be perfectly safe. It is a great thing, this *Anaya*, a strong bond of brotherhood, and, to people engaged in commerce, who are obliged to be everywhere about the country, it is particularly valuable; without it indeed they could not carry on their traffic, and with it are almost sure to prosper. The right which it confers, too, is held sacred, and its violation would bring down the vengeance of a whole tribe. I had proof of this with my own eyes on the day when I witnessed the death of the Bey, which, to the day of my death, I shall never forget."

"Was it then so very terrible?"

"My mustachios are grey; many a time they have been blackened by powder, and yet I never saw danger but once when the recollection of it comes back to my mind. All the other combats in which I have been engaged seem child's play in the comparison."

"The forces then probably of the Bey were insufficient, or perhaps he was abandoned by his followers?"

“Take care, Lieutenant, if you please,” said Caddour, just at this moment, passing his legs over my shoulders to light a lamp of three sockets, the wicks of which were floating about in the oil.

The day had fallen suddenly, and as the night came on, the noise of the streets ceased. At the bottom of the *café* an Arab musician was twanging a guitar, and recording in his war-song, in rude abrupt rhymes of all sorts of metre, the high deeds of arms of some chieftain of the South. The smoking wicks of the lamps suspended from the ceiling, flaring to the right or to the left, according to the current of air, threw a ruddy light on the features of Ali, then threw them in the shade, then flickered ruddily on them again, making him a fit study for Rembrandt. The old soldier was plunged in thought; he was reading over the past, and on his face, generally so impassive, there was graven an impression so profound, that by an involuntary movement, in my impatience to hear his story, I drew closer to him.

Then, shaking his head, as if looking back into the past, “He was a powerful man, that Osman Bey,” said he; “he was a master of the arm. On a day of battle a musket ball smashed out his right eye, but his mind lit up the other, and all

heads bowed to him. He was the worthy son of Mohamed the Great, who drove the Spaniards from the West and from Oran. He had been governor of the West, but was disgraced by the Pacha and sent to Oran, where he ruled strongly and justly. At that time there was a storm-cloud gathering in the mountain. Among the Beni-ouel-Ban, not far from the sea, there had lately come a man named Bou-Daili ; he came from Egypt, and belonged to a sect which the chief hated. He was one of those called *Derkaoua*,\* whether from the rags they wear, or from the guttural pronunciation they affect, I know not. This man incited the mountaineers to attack the Turks, promising them success ; and, when the city of Constantine should be taken, a division of property and dominion over the whole country. His words found so easy an entrance into their hearts, that whilst Bey Osman was on an expedition in the south to chastise the Ouled-Deradj, Bou Daili led twelve thousand mountaineers against the city ; but the hour for the fall of the Turks had not yet come ; our cannon shattered the attacks of the Kabyles, and the Bey, returning in haste, found the plain swept clear of these ravens.

\* A sect of fanatic Mussulmen.

“As soon as this ill news reached Algiers, the Divan met to confer together thereupon, and the Pacha wrote as follows to Osman:—‘ You are Bey of this province, Osman ; the cheriff has appeared in the district under your command ; it is your duty to march against him in person, to take vengeance for the aggression, to come up with him, wherever he may be, and to kill him or drive him out of the country.’ The Bey, having read this letter, called a council of all the great and the powerful. All were of opinion that it was best to be patient, and to obtain by stratagem what it would be dangerous to demand by force. ‘ The wild beast,’ said they, ‘ is not to be attacked in his den, but on the plain. We must wait till they descend.’ But the heart of the Bey was too high to feel fear, so he said, ‘ My father was called Mohamed the Great, and I am called Osman. The Pacha has spoken. I will go. Hold yourselves in readiness to start.’

“It was immediately made known to all the troops that the Bey was about to burn powder in the mountain. It was a fine sight, I can assure you, to witness the departure of so many brave soldiers. At their head marched the Bey. To the right and to the left, a little in front, fifteen

*chaous* kept off the crowd, who were pressing forward to kiss his golden stirrup. In spite, however, of blows dealt indiscriminately on all sides, it was so dense that the pointed breast-plate of the Bey's great black horse, seemed to cut through it as a knife would through a fleshy substance. Behind floated seven banners. Then came bands of music, playing martial airs, and followed by the officers of the household, on brilliantly caparisoned steeds, and a numerous cavalry. The Turkish companies, called the iron-hearted, on whom the Bey placed most reliance, closed the march.

“On the first day of our entrance into the mountain, very few shots were exchanged. The Kabyles meditated treason, and were waiting for the opportune hour and moment. After we had arrived at Oued-Zour, the ravines became frightful; more than one mule rolled down their declivities. At the bottom of one of them, we got sight of the enemy. They were nearly all of them hidden in thick woods, which surround a valley where the soil is so soft and yielding as hardly to bear the pressure of a man's foot. From this place they sent envoys to the Bey. ‘Why,’ said they, ‘should we shoot one another any

longer! A stranger came among us and misled us; but as you do not wish to change our customs, and only ask for the head of the guilty, why should we fall out with each other? Did any one ever refuse to draw a thorn from a wound? No, for the cure follows. Give us, then,' they added, addressing the Bey, ' a party of your men, and we will bring you Bou-Daili; for he has taken refuge in a very strong place, and then your *chaous* may deal with him as you think fit.'

"The day of death had dawned for Bey Osman, and veiled his eagle eye, for he believed these words. Half of his faithful soldiers by his orders marched away, full of confidence, into the ambush laid for them. From our camp we heard their last shrieks. The Kabyles darted on them as a wild beast would from its den. Then the great heart of Osman beat against his breast, and he flew to their succour. We followed his steps. He cut across the valley, thinking to find a road, but under our ranks, being many, the ground sank. We were clogged, and for a while immovable in the mud. The Kabyles might then be seen swarming on all sides, running along every declivity; and a shower of shot fell upon us as thick as hail-stones in a hail-storm. We were

mowed down like grass, and he who fell was to rise no more. Osman, standing upright in his stirrups, with his tall form and menacing aspect, seemed still to defy them, and no ball hit him. He was moving away with the few cavaliers who still surrounded him to a place where the ground looked firmer, when his horse put his foot into a deep hole covered by thick grass, and he disappeared, and the earth closed over him. The Bey was to die, that was written, but his body was not to fall into the hands of the Kabyles. I, with a few others, gained the wood, but we fled from death, only to run upon death. The Kabyles, incited to carnage by the clamorous shrieks of exultation of their women, slew without pity. In the last moments of a man in battle, his whole life is mirrored before him, all that is dear to him rushes to his heart. Zahra, my wife, our little child, and his sweet smile passed before my eyes. My heart failed me in the presence of death, but Zahra brought me a thought which delivered me. I caught hold of the gown of a woman, and asked for the *Anaya*. Proud to show her power, she threw me her veil, and from that moment I was safe, surrounded with her protection. The Kabyles now began firing off, as a rejoicing for

their victory, *feux de joie* on all sides. There was not a single Turk to respond, and the blood ran so abundantly, almost in streams, into the valley, that the Kabyles have ever since called it the *Mortier*. Believe me then, that where his power was broken, and he met with his death, to whom heads, at a wave of his hand, bowed to the dust, the danger is great and success uncertain. Has not Abi-Said said in his commentaries, 'Submit to every power which is strong, for strength is the manifestation of God's will upon earth?' If you are destined to conquer, a cloud of powder will carry you to conquest, and the Kabyle will acknowledge his master."

Ali ceased speaking, he re-lit his pipe, and sunk again into silence. The Arab flute and guitar had been, all the while, shrilling and twanging war songs ; and "the long-barrelled gun brings the enemy down," were the last words of the accompanying rhymes that struck my ear.

"Right," said I, rising, "those words are a good omen ; thanks, old Ali, for your story. Please God, we shall succeed, and not meet with the fate of the Bey."

The narrow lanes of the old town were now plunged in silence from time to time only a

white shadow glided along the walls. In the square, several Arab couriers, crouching beside their horses, at the gates of the palace of the Bey, were waiting for the last dispatches of General St. Arnaud ; for whilst Ali was relating the disasters of Osman Bey, the General, though far from feeling the superstitious terror of the old Turk, yet knowing that he had a formidable enemy to encounter, had held a conference with the officers commanding divisions.

On reaching my own quarters, I learnt that orders for a march had been issued, and my joy was so great, that, all the night long, I saw Kabyles clambering from rock to rock, endeavouring, in vain, to avoid my shots. At day-light these visions gave place to reality, and at noon the bugles sounded the march to Milah, a little town about twelve leagues to the south-west of Constantine, not far from the Kabyle mountains.

## II.

Two brigades of infantry, two hundred and fifty cavalry, twelve hundred beasts of burthen, carrying a heavy convoy, in all, nine thousand five hundred men, from different parts of the province, and even from Algiers, were on the 7th of May last assembled under the walls of Milah. Zouaves, native sharpshooters, the Orleans light infantry, foreign legion, the 8th and 9th of the line, all old African veterans ; the 20th which had just passed over breaches effected by French guns, into Rome, and the 10th newly arrived, were the solid battalions that composed the Kabyle column. Its chiefs were first in command: General St. Arnaud, a man of rapid decision, firm in his purposes, ardent in their execution, and particularly happy in those sudden onsets, in which surprise is victory ; General de Luzy, an officer of the old school, of the Imperial guard ; and General

Bosquet, whose calm and handsome features well reflected the vigour of his mind, and the elevation of his character. Under their orders, were, at the head of each corps, energetic, obedient, devoted officers, sufficiently firm to assume, in case of need, a responsible command; and in the ranks, soldiers who had already run the gauntlet of all the fatigues and hardships of mountain warfare, who knew how to interpret even a look of their chief, and were eager, at the first signal, to obey his most perilous orders, without a moment's hesitation, or a thought of danger. And nothing less than all this was necessary to guarantee our success in the midst of mountains, most difficult of access, where behind every rock, and every declivity, were gathered together a wild population ready to dispute obstinately each pass into lands and fastnesses that had never yet been stained by the triumph of an enemy. Our march was to be direct on the port of Djidgelly. Crossing the country in a straight line, our columns would then at first trace, as it were, a furrow; and then, taking the tribes in flank and rear, we calculated undoubtingly on reducing them to subjection.

On the 8th of May, the inhabitants of Milah, from the half-ruined ramparts of their little city,

under the shade of their gardens in full bloom of flowers, beheld the long line of the column passed in review by General St. Arnaud, on a large plain, scorching under the rays of a blazing sun, where in front of a brilliant staff, the soldiers at the beat of drum, the while playing martial airs, presented arms, within view of those mountains at the horizon, whence so many brave fellows were never to return. A thrill at this spectacle ran through the ranks ; the battle-spring of every heart was touched ; for this was no holiday parade ; it was the chief contemplating his force before leading it into danger, or to death. Of this, however, none thought ; and the impatience of the General, proud of the daring attitude of his battalions, was responded to by all the soldier-hearts before him. On the next day, at day-break, the column marched in the direction of the hill of Beinem, and having crossed the Oued-Eudja, whose limpid waters run under thickets of laurel roses, bivouacked on the frontier of a friendly territory.

On the morning of the 10th, at about nine o'clock, General St. Arnaud, accompanied by all the commanding officers, rode to the top of a rocky crest about two rods from the camp. From

this point the eye could take in a view of the whole country of the Ouled-Ascars, as far as the curtain of mountains which we were to cross the next day. The road, or more correctly speaking the path, affording a sure footing only to goats, passed by a narrow gorge through a hill called Menazel, which was commanded by two crags. To the naked eye, the ground seemed even enough, but by the help of a telescope, deep ravines tearing up the sides of the mountain, woods, and the defensive shelters which the rocks of the right hand crags—especially the little elevated plateaux of most difficult access, on which were several large villages—afforded, might be clearly distinguished. It was by these precipitous paths under the fire of the enemy, who well understood the importance of the position, and had, therefore, chosen it for the theatre of their first combat (one might see them already constructing barricades of earth and dry stones), that the long convoy of our baggage train, that is, of beasts of burthen, were to defile. The General having carefully examined the ground in all its details, taking into exact calculation all its difficulties, now placed himself in the centre of the circle of commanding officers, and explained his plan of advance, pointing out

with his finger the place where each officer would have to operate, and listening to such suggestions as might be offered him. The brigade of General Bosquet, was to sweep the crag on the right, that of General Luzy, the one on the left, after which the two brigades were to turn the Kabyles by the crest of the hill. Towards the hill itself General St. Arnaud was to march in person with a strong reserve for the reinforcement of the column that might be most in need of succour. To each of these columns was attached a body of eighty troopers, who could act upon the little plateaux, that were here and there to be seen among the steeps ; for a cavalry so light and agile as that of Africa, could operate even on such ground, and behind this screen of fire the convoy under the charge of Colonel Jamin, who commanded the rear guard, was to advance along the track thus cleared by the attacking columns. This mission was not less difficult or important than the other two, for according to all probabilities the Kabyles, driven down from the hill tops, would, making their way through the ravines, fall upon our rear. It was a grand and simple sight to see all these warriors on horseback discussing the preliminaries. Their words, like those of

men whose lives are responsible for the advice they give, were curt and to the point. They were fathers of families endeavouring to shield from death as many of their children as they could. Ben-Asdin and Bou-Renan, two chiefs of Zouargha, took part in the conference. This country of Zouargha, surrounding a region the institutions of which are essentially republican in the largest sense of the word, presents the contrast of the feudal system in its most palmy days, and calls to mind those grand feudatories of the France of the middle ages, the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany. Ben-Asdin, during the whole consultation, remained gloomy and silent ; he doubted of our success ; Bou-Renan, a big soldier, grandly jointed, in his place only upon horseback, wild, active and bold, had on the contrary, at a glance measured those we were marching against, and calculating the chances of our success, was full of confidence. He already looked upon himself as chief of the subjugated tribes. As for the French Generals they were familiar with danger, and had got the habit of meeting and overcoming it, by that intelligent union that makes the efforts of all but a single effort, headed and directed by a single man.

On our return, the bivouac having been a little advanced, as far as Ferdj-Beinem, each soldier, after preparing himself for the conflicts of the next day, retired to rest, and at four o'clock in the morning the martial airs of the regimental bands awoke us with a grand reveillie from our slumbers. All were promptly on foot, the tents struck, the mules laden, and in a second the canvass city had disappeared. The trumpet then from head quarters sounded the march, the bugles of every corps repeated the summons, the regiments took up their allotted positions, and in a trice the columns were in readiness to deploy the moment the word of command should be given.

"I saw, this morning," said a Kabyle guide to me, as I was mounting my horse, "a jackall, and two crows, on my right hand, the moment after I got out of bed; that is a good sign for the success of the day."

"So be it," I replied, and my attention was immediately engaged by the movement of the troops that had just begun. We soon reached the first slopes of the Menazel mountains. From the centre of the column, the spectacle before us was one of the highest interest and excitement. As we neared the mountain, the distant buzzing noise

of the enemy, like that of a bee-hive, quite ceased; then, suddenly, from the rocks, the ravines, and the woods, there arose mingled screams, shrieks, and bellowings, like those of wild beasts. The Kabyles, practised in ambushes and retreats, glided among the thickets and crawled rapidly along the chasméd ground, to get close up to the enemy, when firing off their pieces, they bounded away to avoid the responding shots. Gradually a cloud of smoke involved us; the smell of the powder got maddeningly into the brain of the savages; and the scene itself was sufficient to strike terror into the stoutest, witnessing for the first time so confused and frantic an uproar. They were not men, they were wild animals let loose, that environed us. The advancing columns, however, cared little for their stunning outcries, to which the ears of our soldiers had become hardened. On the right, General Bosquet, at the head of the Orleans Chasseurs, the Zouaves, and the Zaatcha corps, inspired his men with his own coolness, collectedness, and ardour. A ball struck his epaulette, and tore away part of his shoulder; but this he heeded not. "Forward!" he cried, and the drums beat the charge; "not a shot must be fired; it would be losing time; on the height,

within close range, you will have your revenge ;" and the Zouaves and Chasseurs escalated the thickets beset with enemies, under a tempest of shot. On the left, meantime, the 20th of the line, under the command of Colonel Marulaz, made their way up the steeps, with a courage worthy of men mindful of the glory they had acquired in Italy. The howitzers followed ; and on the plateau of a village, Bou-Renan, with his cavaliers, and eighty regular cavalry, under the orders of the Commandant Fornier, sabred great numbers of Kabyles. Here the Commandant Valicon fell mortally wounded at the head of his soldiers, whilst the *Turcos*, led on by Captain Bataille, sustained heroically the ancient renown of the militia of the Beys. On this spot the conflict was very severe, the combatants being separated often merely by the lengths of their guns. The formidable Kabyle sword, the *flissa*, dealt in this close fighting, many an ugly wound ; and M. de Vandermissen, a Belgian officer, distinguished himself by a brilliant display of imprudent valour, which threatened to prove fatal to him, in pursuing the enemy. In the centre Colonel Espinasse made several vigorous charges ; whilst General St. Arnaud, in readiness

to repair the slightest accident, kept the whole combined movement steadily under his view. Our fire was soon heard near the top of the mountain; the right hand crag was immediately afterwards escaladed by the Zouaves, and their green turbans appeared in a few seconds on its summit. Then came their bayonets into terrific play, and the Kabyles were precipitated from the rocks.

“Jump,” said one of these Zouaves to an Arab, cutting capers in his bold desperation before his bayonet, “jump, Monsieur Areonaut!” whilst laughing, he wiped the blood from his cheek, just slightly grazed by the *flissa* of the mountaineer. On the left, at the same time, the drums beat and the bugles sounded, for the height of Menazel was attained, and generals and commanding officers, promptly assembled, having but one report to make in praise of the bravery of their soldiers.

The troops now took breath. Every soldier wiped the glorious sweat of combat from his brow. The wounded were then, one by one, brought before the surgeons; and whilst the heavy convoy was making its slow progress along the narrow paths, the soldiers, throwing off the weight of their

accomplished achievement, gave themselves up to rest and the enjoyment of their success. Many of us looked down with astonishment on the precipices which, in the ardour of our ascent, we had escaladed, and the sight of them alone brought back the sense of fatigue which we should have otherwise forgotten. A few companies kept the Kabyles at a respectful distance; but, as we had to descend the opposite steeps to reach St. Aoussa, where we were to bivouac, General St. Arnaud, suspecting the enemy might fall upon the rear-guard, ordered the two brigade-generals, Bosquet and De Luzy, to maintain their positions till the whole convoy should have passed. Many long hours of marching were still before us, and the night had fallen ere the troops reached the place of encampment. Frequent shots were still exchanged, and the rear-guard had several sharp attacks to sustain. Colonel Jamin, who through the whole day had proved himself quite equal to the difficult charge confided to him, arrived at eight o'clock at night with his *last* companies within the lines of the camp, which it was very difficult to defend from the assaults of the enemy. The water, however, which the wells at this place supplied, obliged the General to halt here; but he

took good care that the Kabyles should not disturb the sleep of his soldiers ; for all the military positions, at great distances from each other, were taken possession of by strong detachments ; and the foreign legion had orders to pass the night on a rocky elevation, separated by a wood from the camp, in order to keep up a strict watch against any disturbance of our repose. The legion, on arriving at this post, found it already occupied. The Kabyles were quietly preparing their evening meal, awaiting the proper hour for an attack. They were instantly dislodged, and hunted through the wood ; and the out-post was so unremittingly on the alert—all eye and ear—during the night, that no mountaineer dared make an attempt at approach.

The chief of the Arab bureau, the Commandant De Neveu, having learnt, by his spies, that numerous contingents of Ouled-Aouns had assembled in a ravine not far from our camp, in order to make an attack upon us on the following day, General St. Arnaud resolved to anticipate their purpose by attacking them, whilst another brigade should, at the same time, make a sweep clean of the Ouled-Ascars, our enemies of the evening before. To General Bosquet the first,

and to General de Luzy the second, of these enterprises was confided. The successful opening of the campaign had put the troops in good heart ; but they had need of all their enthusiasm, and all their confidence in their General ; for their severest trials were yet to come.

The protection of a convoy, lengthened out man by man, and mule by mule, for the space of a league and a half, through pathways not two feet broad, sometimes to be cut through the rocks by our pioneers ; descending precipitous ravines, winding up long steeps, commanded on the right hand and on the left by rocks and woods, was a very arduous undertaking. To secure the provisions, the ammunition, and the wounded, from the assaults of a bold, active, numerous, and determined enemy, a hedge of soldiery of all arms, all round, was not more than necessary. The vanguard, following the narrow path, cleared the way, and to the right and to the left, on the sides of the convoy, the battalions had orders to march on a parallel height, no matter what the nature of the ground might be, sometimes detaching companies, and sometimes, in case of need, occupying the military positions that commanded the road. The fatigue of the soldier on such a march, laden for the

whole day long, from the rising to the setting of the sun, with his knapsack and provisions, his cartouche constantly at his mouth, and his musket almost always in his hand, across a country nearly impassible, may well be conceived. Then came the rear-guard, on whom generally the brunt of the conflict fell; and so much did General St. Arnaud fear that the convoy might be broken through, that he had, here and there, at equi-distant intervals, placed companies of infantry in the line of progression. But our information was correct, and for a time the country seemed a plain, in comparison with the mountainous tract which the column had clambered through on the 13th. The train, kept in constant movement by non-commisioned officers who had it in charge to see especially to this, lost no ground; the positions occupied, according as we advanced, by detachments, protected its passage; and thus the enemy, though daring and numerous, was kept at a respectful distance.

At one of the most difficult passes on our left flank there was an extremely important position, for it commanded completely the road over which the mules had to pass. This post was first occupied by the Zouaves, and then by the 16th light

infantry, under the orders of Commandant Camas, who was relieved by two companies of the 10th of the line, lately arrived from France. This corps, being for the first time engaged in African warfare, was not yet inured to suffering, and had to experience one of those surprises which new troops rarely escaped. The Commandant Camas, however, neglected nothing to put them on their guard. He pointed out the positions they were to occupy, the paths by which they should retreat, and, in leaving them, left complete directions behind him. But unfortunately the enemy for a while disappeared; throughout the wood all was silent, and, with the inexperience of men unaccustomed to war, the soldiers of the 10th believed themselves in perfect safety. Some, yielding to fatigue, laid themselves down to rest, whilst others, equally indifferent, gazed with anxious interest on the sharp skirmishing in which the rear-guard was engaged. No one was on the watch. Meantime the Kabyles glided, crawled, and clambered up the steeps, among the thickets; till more than four hundred of them, at the top of the hill, made known their presence by a fearful war shout, and rushed upon their enemy. The soldiers, in their dismay, thronged about their officers.

“To the bayonet! to the charge!” cried Captain Dufour; and all who wore sword or stripe were in a second hand-to-hand with their assailants. All these brave fellows, five officers and non-commissioned officers, and thirty-five grenadiers, fell instantly, killed or mortally wounded, face to face with their outnumbering foe; others, less courageous, parleyed, implored, attempted resistance, and then threw down their arms. A panic seized the remainder. Life, even bought with disgrace, was their only hope; the Kabyles were their only fear; every other danger was disregarded; and throwing themselves from the rocks, they ran, mangled and bleeding from their fall, in terror into the ranks of the convoy. An heroic death on the height expiated, meanwhile, the error which inexperience in war had occasioned. Being masters of the position, the Kabyles now kept up an incessant fire on the convoy, and even attempted to break its line; disorder, indeed, was commencing; the frightened mules had broken into a trot, and a few minutes of most dangerous confusion ensued. Happily, General St. Arnaud was near the spot, and on his appearance order was soon restored. Two companies of the 9th were sent up the rocks, and though Captain

Gournerie, who led them on, was shot dead at their head by a Kabyle ball, his death was promptly avenged in Kabyle blood.

This success renewed the courage of the enemy, and the Orleans Chasseurs were consequently vigorously pursued, when, on quitting their position, they joined the company which brought up the rear of the rear-guard. Colonel Espinasse had expected this attack, and had made his preparations accordingly. Keeping with him but a hundred men of the 20th, he had sent the Turcos to form a reinforcement in the wood. The Turcos, however, deceived by the inequalities of the ground, had halted too far off, and when the Colonel commenced his retreat, his little troop, assailed on all sides, was on the point of being overwhelmed. Its ranks were for a moment in disorder, and the slightest hesitation would have been fatal. Seeing this at a glance, the colonel adopted at once and vigorously the offensive, repulsed the Kabyles, rescued the wounded, had them carried away on the men's shoulders, he himself carrying one on his own ; and being shortly joined by fresh troops, resumed his place in the extreme rear, which, with the Turcos of the Commandant

Battaille, and the 20th of the line, he had maintained since the morning.

After the warm and obstinate conflicts that had lasted during the whole day, it was most refreshing to halt in a delicious spot, on a greensward overshadowed by thick branching trees, with a limpid brook murmuring hard by. Here the wounded were laid out on the grass, and the surgeons re-examined their wounds, which had been only imperfectly dressed and bandaged, in the hurry of the march, whilst, a little further off, groups of soldiers with listening ears were assembling around the regimental bands playing airs from the opera of *Haidee*. These soldiers looked like such real cockneys of the *Champs Elysées*—they seemed such simple idlers, that, to use an Arab expression, one might have thought they had come out of a gun barrel the moment before, and were to return whence they came the moment after. But such is military life; it is full of contrasts the most grotesque and stirring, which constitute the charm that so powerfully attaches the soldier to his vocation. And then there is besides a perfect carelessness about the future, and a thorough consciousness of duty performed. The

present hour belongs to the soldier, the future to his chief. "He may have cares enough," the private or subaltern may say; "the close of the day may bring him nothing but anxiety; but as for me, this music is delightful; *Haidee* is certainly charming, and I can listen my fill to it without any disturbance at all." But, alas! all pleasures soon come to an end.

As the General was taking his place at the head of his column the next morning, a volley of about twenty shots was fired from a neighbouring jungle, by which a guide was killed by his side, and a Zouave wounded close to the legs of his horse. The Commandant Fleury, with a troop of horsemen and a company of Zouaves, thereupon sprang forward and hunted the Kabyles out of their ambushes. A party of Zouaves had already had orders to beat up and clear the wood in that direction, but inclining too much to the left, a hollow way hidden by low brushwood had escaped their notice. This accident of so much importance was quickly repaired, and the column resumed its painful march which was to be continued till nightfall. Colonel Creuly of the engineers, and Captain Samson, were, more than once during this march, obliged to use the pickaxe and the spade of their

sappers to make a path for the mules to clamber up the mountains.

Advancing in this manner, descending ravines, escalading mountains, harrassed by mad dogs of human shape and faculty, whom the flanking parties could hardly keep at bay, the command of the extreme rear was an exceedingly perilous position. The Commandant was obliged to regulate his movements by those of the convoy. He could choose neither his time nor place for attack or defence. Sometimes he was under the necessity of advancing rapidly, at others of standing firm against all assaults, under every disadvantage of ground. If a mule rolled over a precipice, it was to be got up, if the wounded were not yet in their litters they must needs have another stoppage; and every accident was a hindrance to progress. Nevertheless, though always surrounded by furious hordes, the soldiers, such is the virtue of discipline, remained calm and immoveable; and this heroic endurance was the more admirable, as a little glory is ever attached to the services of a rear-guard. But glory was not sought for: it was a sense of honour and of duty, which constitutes the main strength of every military force, sustaining our men throughout a

series of rude trials such as troops are rarely exposed to.

The Turcos at the rear, acted this day a conspicuous part, and one often not a little amusing; for they could play off with the enemy stratagem against stratagem, and trick against trick. These native soldiers and the Kabyles insulted each other, like Homer's heroes, though doubtless they had never read the *Iliad*. On one occasion three men of this battalion laid a trap for some Arabs, with whom they had been exchanging a little Homeric vituperation. They pretended to hide themselves behind a clump of trees. The Kabyles seeing them, levelled their guns, fired, and the three Turcos fell; whereupon, up ran the Kabyles to plunder their victims, when just as they were stooping for the purpose, a ball through the breast of each of them stretched their corpses on the ground. The three Turcos had but shammed being killed, and after the performance of this feat, gliding like snakes through the thickets, rejoined their comrades. It was thus, in the species of warfare we were engaged in, that there was large scope for individual distinction. All were, no doubt, subordinate to the will of the Commander-in-chief, but his orders once known, the individual

intelligence and sagacity of the soldier had no narrow range of activity. Mountain warfare in Africa is a good deal like those theatrical pieces in which the situations, the groupings, and the characters are fixed by the author, whilst the dialogue is left to be filled up by the actors themselves; and at times with us, I can assure you, the dialogue was excessively animated.

Though the troops on this march conducted themselves no doubt well, they did not display the same ardour and enthusiasm as on the day preceding. For when soldiers, who from the early morning have been in constant combat in such a chaos of woods and mountains as we were involved in, begin to see their shadows lengthening, their spirit sinks with their bodily strength, and a kind of morbid resignation, from very weariness, comes over them. The massacre and flight too, of the companies of the 10th had produced the most painful impression, and many a heart shuddered, and many a face was darkened at the sight of the heads of their comrades, their eyes bursting out of their sockets, and their bloody tongues rolling from their mouths, stuck on long poles, and brandished before their ranks. The soldier knows well that he is every day exposed to death,

and about this he cares not ; but the idea of having his head cut off after he has fallen greatly scares and revolts him.

At nightfall, when the battalion of the vanguard were forming their bivouac, the convoy was only beginning to debouch from a narrow pathway, where it was impossible to pass two abreast. It was a dark, moonless night. General St. Arnaud had just stationed the outpost, and was watching, by the side of a fire of olive wood, with several officers of his staff about him, the defiling of the convoy, when a report came like wildfire through the train, that the rear-guard was broken ! Two thousand men separated from the column ! It was dismaying intelligence ; but the General seemed not dismayed ; and as it would have been impossible to send an officer back alone through such frightful roads, and a reinforcement, should the report prove true, would be required, the Zouaves were immediately ordered to resume their arms.

Nothing can emphasise so much, can give such crushing weight to the fatigue of a long march, as half-an-hour's rest. And this the poor Zouaves now experienced. They had been harrassed all day, employed on every sort of service, and yet

though, to use their own expression, *the calves of their legs had gone to Rome*, at the first sound of the bugle they started from their beds, and at the second they were ready to march. These old African veterans were always on the alert when peril was at hand ; its approach was quite enough to drive away their fatigue. It is thus that they have gained their honourable name ; for who is there in France that has not heard of the Zouave ? “If you wish to conquer danger,” said an old soldier to me once, “throw your soul on the other side of it.” This phrase would form a fitting motto for the Zouaves, as, whenever danger was before them, their hearts were at the other side of it till it was overcome.

The alarm turned out, in a short time, to be a false one. Captain Boyer, who had just seen Colonel Espinasse, informed the General that nothing extraordinary had happened ; that there were some killed, and some wounded, but not in great numbers. We all then retired to rest, and an hour afterwards all who were not on duty were sleeping the sleep of the just.

On the 14th of May, we did not commence our march till nine o’clock in the morning, for General St Arnaud thought it advisable to give

the troops a few hours' more breathing time than usual. The day's march, also, was not to be a long one, and M. de Maistre, the physician-general, had a little time to visit more than two hundred and fifty wounded. The convoy of the wounded from the bivouac, was always a noble and a touching sight ; for all bore their sufferings so patiently, that not a complaint, not a murmur would escape them, whilst on their features, contracted from time to time with pain, was graven deeply a sentiment of pride, the mark of the enemy's ball on their bodies being regarded as a decoration of honour. In spite of every care and attention, they had, however, great agonies to endure. Tied in little iron chains, they were suspended to the sides of mules, and shaken about at every step of the march, as those alone who had their legs cut off, could be stretched in litters. The chaplain of the column, the Abbé Parabère, never quitted the hospital party for a moment, and his ascetic face was always welcome among them ; for he administered consolation to all who had need of it, and no one was more profoundly respected by the whole force than he was. The soldiers of the Commandant Valicon, carried his litter at the head of the *ambulance*. They had

solicited this honour as a particular favour; for the brave fellows wished to alleviate as much as possible the sufferings of their commander, who was—and he was perfectly well aware of it—mortally wounded. The last hours he passed in our ranks were worthy of his noble soldier life. Up to the end, that is, to the next day, which was the day of his death, he was calm, patient, and simply courageous, without parade. One anxiety alone disturbed him, which he confided to his oldest friend, General Bosquet. He had a child, and a young wife about to become, for the second time, a mother; and as M. Valicon had no fortune but his sword, he felt at moments keen regret at leaving those so dear to him unprovided for.\*

The advanced positions were already occupied when the column resumed its march. General Luzy led the van, and General Bosquet's brigade formed the rear-guard. A good night's rest had refreshed every one; the morbid apathy of the preceding evening was completely shaken off, and our soldiers, in good heart, found the reports of their own shots once again music to their ears. The ground over which we marched, too, offered

\* The President of the Republic has since given a pension to the widow of the Commandant Valicon.

fewer difficulties than we had hitherto met with. We re-descended the valley, leaving a little to our right, the spot where Osman Bey had perished —where, says the legend of the country, two flames are often seen issuing from the earth, from which the Kabyles fly away in the utmost terror. On the left of this position the firing was for a while extremely brisk, when suddenly the Commandant Meyer, of the Foreign Legion, an old soldier who had had twenty years campaigning in Africa, and was about to retire from the service, heard it no more. “They are at it with the bayonet,” he said to himself, and immediately hastened to reinforce the party with the rest of the battalion. But the companies had held good their ground, like wild boars at bay; three times had they rescued one of their officers from the hands of the Kabyles, who writhed and raged against them as wild beasts robbed of their prey. Knowing well, and thoroughly dreading the Zouaves, and the Orleans Chasseurs, the Arabs thought that those soldiers wearing the uniform of the line were, like those of the 10th, newly arrived, and that they should make an easy conquest of them. But by the time the Commandant Meyer had arrived, the soldiers of the Legion had already shown the

enemy that they reckoned without their host. The Commandant then continued his march along the crest of the hill, but having to send for litters to carry off the wounded, the Adjutant of the battalion, to whom this mission was entrusted, had to cross the wood alone. "Tell General Luzy," said the Commandant to him, "that I will hold my ground here for four-and-twenty hours, if necessary, but that I shall require a reinforcement to descend into the valley." The General, in consequence, sent mules and some companies of the 16th, and of the Orleans Chasseurs, and the Commandant, thus strengthened, was no further molested by the enemy.

The sea breeze already wafted its fresh odours into our lungs, and in a little time the immense blue line of the distant ocean was before us. It is impossible to describe the refreshment and relief we each of us experienced in getting out from the midst of the stifling gorges in which for so many days we had been shut up. We had now space and a free current of air, at least, about us; and it was no longer necessary to be on the look out for an ambushed enemy behind every tree and every rock. Our march was at present along the sea side, and our Orleans Chasseurs found plenty

of amusement in burning villages on the way, and giving proof of their dexterity in firing at and hitting the living targets flitting in affright all around them. We bivouacked in a magnificent valley at Kanar ; the next day, a party of cavalry, despite the heavy rains, made an excursion to destroy several hamlets in its vicinity.

On the 16th of May, after five hours of constant fusillading, we arrived under the walls of Djidgelly, and established our camp on a rich plain, not far from the town. The first part of our work was at present accomplished. We had now, having the city for our base of operations, to take the confederate tribes in the rear, and to make incursions into the mountains in order to hunt them out of their strongholds. Djidgelly, which had the honour to be taken by the Duke of Beaufort, and to have its port occupied by Duquesne, who proposed to Louis XIV. the foundation of a maritime establishment there, was one of the principal dock stations of the Algerine navy, the wood for ship-building being brought from the magnificent forests of the Beni-Fourghal. The little town itself, kept in excellent repair, and as clean as a Flemish bourg, is nevertheless but a gloomy place of residence ; for being almost con-

stantly blockaded, the garrison knew no other variety than that of seeing a steam-boat occasionally drop its anchor in the bay. The column, however, for the time gave it great animation, especially as the Titan, with General Pelissier on board, arrived at the same time that we did. The Governor-General the day after his arrival assembling the officers, thanked them, and paid them high and merited compliments, on the brilliant valour they had displayed in the passage of the mountains, and then, with the whole force, attended mass, celebrated by the Abbé Parabère. The soldiers came to the mass voluntarily, for let it be well understood, that danger softens the heart, and gives to the rudest and most inconsiderate the conviction that, beyond time and sense, there is something to which a feeling of homage is due. Prayer, and the indulgence of the religious affections become then a want; and the worship of God strengthens the soldier in his duties. There is no reasoning about it, the want is felt, and therefore satisfied; for the African army, whatever reproach it may be open to, is certainly not open to that of hypocrisy.

The evening of the same day that had seen officers and soldiers bending reverently before a

modest altar, saw them surrounding with still deeper feelings the grave of the Commandant Valicon. The body, piously borne to its last resting place by his faithful regiment, reposed under the protection of the banner for which he had died ; and the last salute once fired over their former Commander, the features of the brave band who had fired it, resumed again that expression of disdain for life, and ardour for battle, which so well became them. Such are always the soldiers' feelings at the death of a comrade, or a friend ; and let no one accuse him of indifference, or insensibility, for a few days afterwards, when the young wife of the Commandant, who had hastened to join her husband the moment she heard of his wound, arrived at Djidgelly, the anxious and delicate attentions which met and surrounded her, were those of a mother rather than of rude soldiers. On her disembarkation she would not believe her husband was dead. "He is not dead," said she, "he cannot be dead. Tell me truly, he is not dead ?—it cannot be, he loved me so much !" We were obliged then to give the whole history of his last moments, and then she wept afresh, and the same questions were renewed, and she returned again and for ever to the same subject,

being quite incapable of any other thought. This was too painful. One may brave danger, and support suffering, but the sight of such grief, so pure, and so profound, unmans one.

The equipments and shoes of all being repaired, and the vessel, so to speak, refitted, we were rather surprised, and even impatient, at our long repose, when a welcome marching order, on the 19th, put us all again upon the alert. The column now marched first against the Beni-Amran, for it was General St. Arnaud's object to separate the confederates of the west from those of the east; he had no hope, however, that the Kabyles would play as they did into his hands. At noon our tents were pitched, at two leagues from the camp, on a magnificent plateau; and from the rich and luxuriant stretches of land around us, the Kabyles might be seen, along the whole line of the crest of hills, moving about and crossing each other in all directions, with a buzzing noise, preparing themselves for their defences. The ground itself indicated the plan of attack. The brigade of General Bosquet, forming the diameter of a circle on the right, was to descend upon and drive down the enemy; General St. Arnaud to advance on the centre; and further to the left, General Luzy;

whilst at the extreme left, the cavalry were to block up the passage, through which alone the Kabyles could fly; and towards this point all the attacking columns were to converge. Three Zouave companies had taken up their position to the right in a turning towards this important point, in order to keep open the passage of a ravine leading to it. They had here to sustain the most determined and combined assaults of the Kabyles; but they were the troops to whom Colonel Canrobert had said at Zaatcha: "At any cost we must escalade these walls, and if the retreat sounds, recollect, Zouaves, it does not sound for you." These Zouaves were now to remain firm as walls; and cut to pieces they would have been rather than have given ground one inch. Colonel Jamin, seeing from the camp the enemy making towards this spot, sent immediately a few companies to effect a diversion. The Bosquet brigade, meantime, continued to advance; and General St. Arnaud had also come up with the enemy, the Kabyles in vain endeavouring, at this moment, to screen themselves from the bombs of Colonel Elias, and the impetuous charges of the Orleans Chasseurs, who in all these forays endeavoured to surpass themselves.

in coolness, energy, courage, and promptitude. General Luzy, less fortunate, could only fire a few distant shots among the enemy; but Colonel Bouscaren, from the top of the hills, fell into the very midst of them; and the Chasseurs and Spahis sabred away at their good pleasure. At four o'clock, when we returned to the camp, the Spahis, according to their Arab custom—which French discipline had not abolished, for that in their eyes would have been a dishonour—had their saddle-bows filled with strings of ears, and the heads of Kabyles fixed at the points of their bayonets. As for the Chasseurs of the 3rd, it sufficed them to slay Kabyles without mutilating their carcasses.

If the 19th had been a merry day in the French camp, the 20th was a feast day, for our soldiers had the pleasure of cutting up the Kabyles in masses. The tribes of the west, imagining they had been badly commanded on the 19th, attributed their failure to a want of union in their attack. They were, therefore, on this day gathered together in great numbers at the hill of Malta-el-Missia, through which our road passed, and there they were determined to risk a general action. General St. Arnaud, rejoicing in this prospect, left the camp with eight

battalions, without knapsacks, four howitzers, and all the cavalry, and marched straight upon the enemy, who occupied a woody height of about three rods long. Their left was defended by a deep ravine; and on their right was a plain, extending as far as the hills, on which they had taken up their position. These hills gradually declined, till they reached a rising ground of very easy access, which commanded the ravine on the left, whence was their only issue. The cavalry, followed at double quick trot by the Orleans Chasseurs, were to take possession of this hill; the Turcos to climb the heights on the left, and commence an attack on that side; whilst on the right the Zouaves and the Bosquet brigade had orders to push vigorously on, and sweep all before them. The whole column marched at the same moment, and the movements just described being executed with perfect precision, the Kabyles were tossed up and about like a ball by a racket, whilst under the fire of the infantry and the sabre of the cavalry, four hundred and eighty of them, in a very short time, strewed the battle-field. Such a blow might well stun even a Kabyle head, and on the next day, consequently, the chiefs of the Beni-Amram duly made their submission.

The first part of the expedition now over, General St. Arnaud had still to take the country on the reverse side, describing two great arches of a circle, marching first towards the south and east, to return to Djidgelly, and then along the coast again towards the south, to come back a second time to the city, before he could finish his severe campaign by the chastisement of the mountain-eers of Collo. Many difficulties were still to be encountered. Rich olive groves and magnificent forests made the ground almost impracticable, and the tribes were, besides, more savage than any we had yet encountered, and particularly skilled, as we soon learnt by experience, in the defence of their mountains and ravines. On the 14th of June, our bivouac was established at about two feet from a rocky crest, at least four hundred meters high, which was thought inaccessible, and the great guards had taken up their positions, and the camp had sunk to sleep, when the Kabyles, having, unobserved and unheard, crawled and clambered up the rocks, opened a fire upon us, and rolled down from the heights, through rugged passages hollowed by torrents, enormous blocks of stone on our encampment. Thereupon, the Zouaves on the left, and the 20th

of the line on the right, hastened to take the enemy in the rear, whilst two companies of the 16th light infantry, belonging to the guard on this side of the camp, escaladed the rock, finding footing on its projecting stones, and swinging themselves up from projection to projection, by bushes that grew out of its fissures. The Kabyles, meantime, having observed the movement of the Zouaves and the 20th, directed all their attention to the attack they expected to rear-ward, and noticed not the little party clambering up the precipice ; so that these light-limbed soldiers, climbing agilely like goats, through narrow paths unseen below, were unmolested in their perilous ascent. The whole bivouac, breathless with suspense, doubting and hoping, till the party finally reached the summit, had turned out to view the feat. Once there, one volley was sufficient to scatter the Kabyles, who but slightly attempted a vain resistance ; and the two companies in possession of the rock were rewarded by the applause of the whole camp, whose uninterrupted rest for the night they had so hazardously secured.

It is thus, that in mountain warfare individual prowess and audacity have ample scope for distinction. The officer in command, and the soldier, too,

must be individually bold and decided, for success often depends on a prompt resolution and a rapid order. On the 24th of June, the Beni-Marcas and a fraction of the Beni-Habibi, came in great numbers around the camp to give in, as was supposed, their submission. They occupied the olive wood on the right of the river, whilst their chiefs betook themselves to the general quarters. But instead of surrendering at discretion, it soon appeared that they desired merely to discuss conditions of peace, so the General drove them from his presence, and immediately ordered the Zouaves, the 20th of the line, and the native sharp-shooters, to scour the wood, and at the point of the bayonet to expel the enemy from the vicinity of the camp. In this foray a great number of them were killed. On the next day several detachments of light infantry burnt their villages, and the cool intrepidity of Colonel Espinasse finished what the rapid decision of the Commander-in-Chief had begun. The evening before, Colonel Espinasse, on an expedition to set fire to these really magnificent homesteads, was suddenly stopped in his march by a precipitous ravine nearly a hundred metres deep. Trusting to this natural defence, the enemy thought themselves in perfect safety.

At about half a league on the other side of it, however, the villages destined to the flames, were distinctly visible ; and the Colonel, who was not a man easily to relinquish his purpose, ordered a company of the Turcos to break their ranks, and at any risk to gain the other side of the ravine, "For," said he, "if one man can pass, my whole party may." For three-quarters of an hour, the Turcos, grappling at the stones, clinging at the bushes, and rolling sometimes down into the bed of the gully, were anxiously watched by the detachment. At last a Turco appeared on the other side ; this was sufficient, it was evident the passage could be effected ; so, leaving his mules and his artillery, and even his horse, with a reserve, behind him, Colonel Espinasse plunged, with his men, into the ravine, and after a hard struggle with the declivities and acclivities of the fearful chasm, surmounted all its difficulties. Having done so, however, his position was an extremely dangerous one, for had the Kabyles attacked him, he would have been obliged to abandon his wounded. Relying, nevertheless, on his address, to avoid a combat, he cried out to the Kabyles who were thronging towards him, pointing to the smoke of their villages, at a distance, "Behold your fate ; if you

do not instantly accompany me to the general and demand *aman*." No obstacle, he told them, as they might judge for themselves, was capable of arresting the progress of French conquest, and he gave them five minutes to come to a decision. Before this time had elapsed the chiefs were following the Colonel to the General's quarters, and this prompt submission of the Beni-Habibi enabled the column to continue its march. It had, however, still a severe conflict to sustain.

Yet nothing, on the morning of the 26th, betokened a combat for that day. The order for marching having been given, and the usual precautions taken, the column advanced, man by man, and mule by mule, with the sappers, pickaxe in hand, at their head, to break and throw up paths through the rocks. General St. Arnaud, from the top of a crag, swept the horizon with his glass, but seeing no symptoms of an impending attack, rejoined the column, leaving the Marceley brigade with the rear-guard, the Zouaves, the 20th of the line, and Colonel Espinasse being in readiness at the same time, in case of need, for a vigorous defence. It was near eleven o'clock, and our rear, so slow was the progress of the convoy, had not yet left the ground of the

bivouac, when it became suddenly evident that an obstinate conflict was at hand, for on the mountains and in the valleys, numerous bands of Kabyles on all sides began to swarm, and as our advanced posts had received orders not to fire, they were obliged to repulse them with the bayonet. At last, towards noon, our last companies were on the march ; and Colonel Espinasse, having observed a little before that the enemies' masses might endeavour to overwhelm him, was already retreating by an echelon movement to a high ground favourable for defence, when he was under the necessity of halting at about two rods from this place, and of holding his ground under every disadvantage, as the convoy hindered his advance. Seeing the difficulties that surrounded him, the hot impatience and fury of the Kabyles redoubled, but the collected impetuosity of our soldiers was more than their match. A little crag formed the key of this position, and this narrow spot became the theatre of a most stubborn struggle. Colonel Espinasse played his fiery soldiers of the 20th, as a tennis player does his ball, tossing it hither and thither at his will ; whilst the valiant Zouaves formed the barrier against which the flood tide of enemies raged, and

was broken and scattered. Each soldier seemed to feast upon danger, bayonets were several times crossed, and more than one hand grasping the musket was cut through by the long Kabyle flissa. Dead and wounded, Kabyles and French, lay heaped together, and there was no time to remove them, for on the plateaux, where they fell, which was taken and retaken alternately, the conflict continued raging. If, overpowered by numbers, we yielded for a moment, the whole party would cry out, "Forward ! forward !" and again rush to the attack, led on by Colonel Espinasse, who was always conspicuous where the danger was greatest. Finally, the convoy had marched past, and we could continue our route.

The 205 wounded and 26 killed, amongst whom were two officers, were, as soon as succour arrived from the rear-guard, placed on the backs of mules, and carried to the field hospital. In this combat was seen once more the influence which a commander may exert over his men, and another as remarkable instance of the same kind occurred again in the course of this expedition. On the 30th, the column being among the Ouled-Aissa, spies had informed the General that the neighbouring tribes were preparing for an attack on

the camp during the night; therefore a necessary precaution was consequently taken, the great guards doubled, and the soldiers remaining up, close to their piled arms, were ready to handle them at a moment's notice. At about ten o'clock the buzzing sound of distant multitudes in movement began to be heard, and, a little afterwards, the long shrill cries, half-drowned and scattered in the air, of different bands wide apart, signalling and communicating with each other. A storm was then coming on, and the wind getting up, when, at the order of the General, every soldier took his musket from the pile, and stood in his ranks immovable, silent, waiting. Not a sound was to be heard throughout the bivouac, whilst the noise of the enemy, like an invading torrent overflowing its banks, approached nearer and nearer, till their scramble through the bushes, and the dry wood crackling under their feet, might be distinctly heard. At moments long flashes of lightning discovered the horizon, and lit up the camp on which darkness the next second again fell. The enemy was now quite close, and it was a question whether or not the great guards on the North had been surprised; for shouts, coming from a craggy height, occupied by the

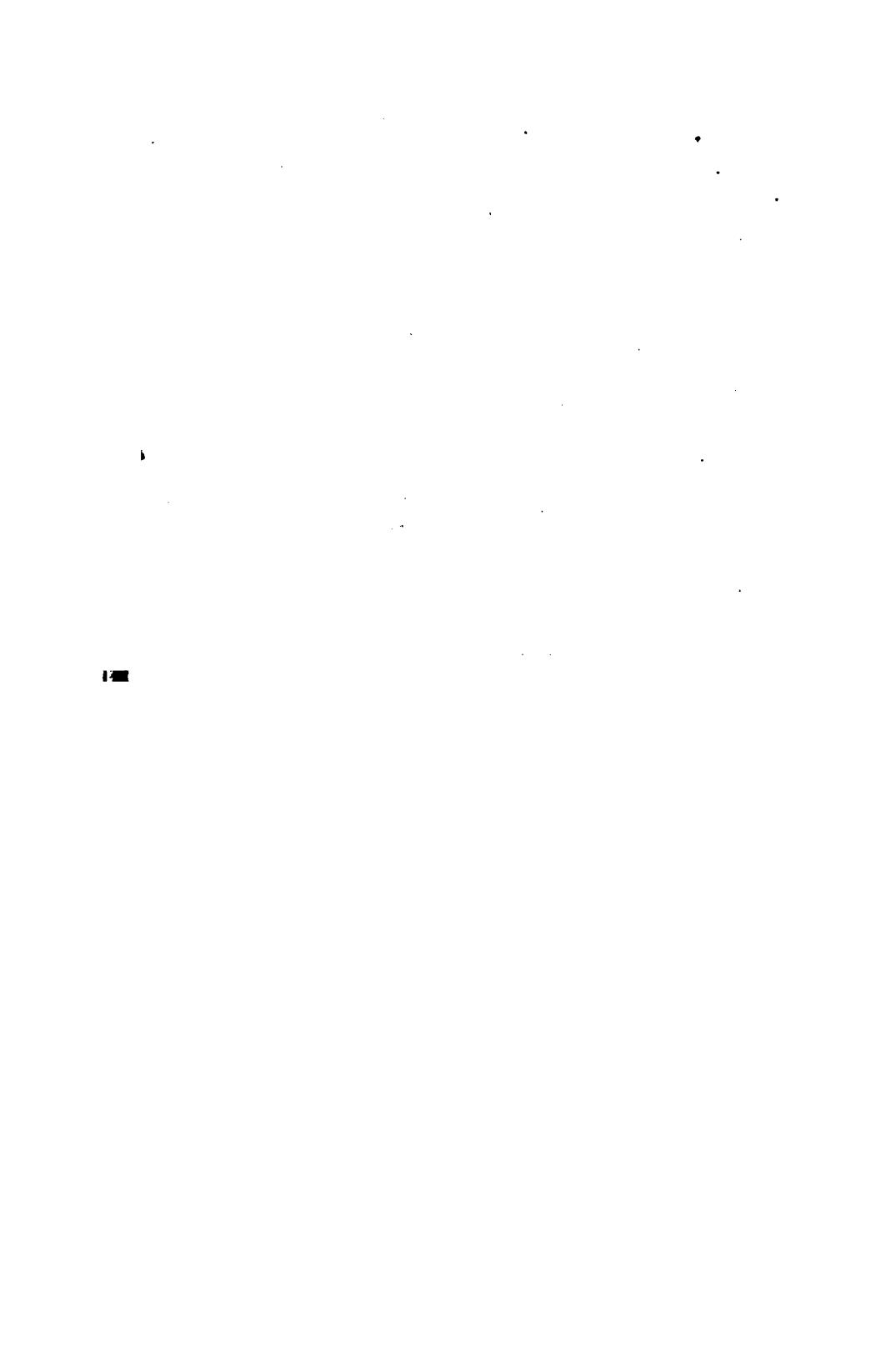
Orleans Chasseurs, made the General very uneasy. Meantime, on this very height, the Chasseurs, lying flat on their faces, their bayonets being stuck in the earth, that their glitter might not betray them, were waiting for the orders of Captain Lapalle. The Kabyles saw them not, they saw no obstacles, and were advancing full of confidence, till one of them stumbled and fell over a chasseur, when "up and at them," cried out Captain Lapalle, and the company were on their feet in a moment, charging with the bayonet a host of Kabyles, so frightened at their sudden appearance that they flung down their arms and fled, spreading terror all around them.

In spite of the hot weather, which greatly aggravated our fatigue, the column continued its forays up to the 18th of July. Its work being then accomplished, General St. Arnaud, on whom the whole responsibility of the expedition had rested, returned to Constantine, and the troops to their cantonments, where, after a few days repose, they were engaged in those useful civil occupations which invariably in Africa succeed to the glorious toils of war.

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One evening, under the tent of Caid Mohamed, of the tribe of the Harads, I heard an Arab of the South entertaining his comrades with a war story, in which he told how brave soldiers, badly commanded, had been beaten by an inferior foe. The moral the story-teller drew from his narrative was this:—"That a herd of deer, commanded by a lion, are better than a herd of lions commanded by a deer. 'But as for you,' said he, turning towards us, 'in times to come, when fathers shall tell their children the history of your foot soldiers, and your troopers, they will say, victory followed their steps, for lions were led on by lions.' "

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